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THE VOICE OF LINCOLN

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

From the statue by Augustus Saint-Gaudens at Chicago, Ill.

THE VOICE OF LINCOLN

BY

R. M. WANAMAKER

A JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1920

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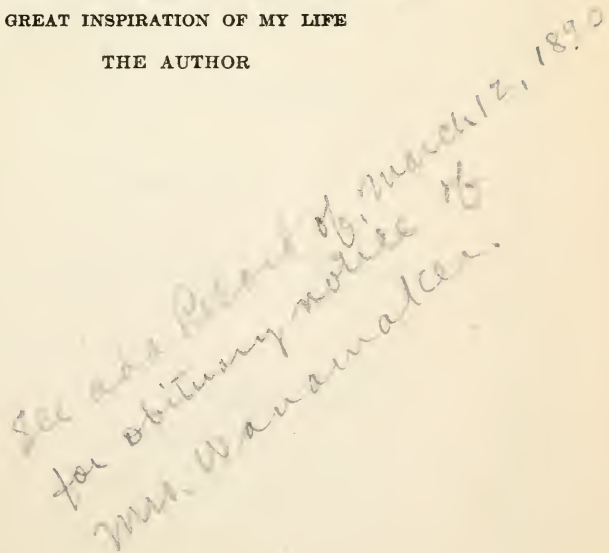
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO THE
MEMORY OF MY MOTHER

LAURA SHOENBERGER WANAMAKER

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
FEBRUARY 26, 1890
HER LOVE AND AMBITION HAVE BEEN THE
GREAT INSPIRATION OF MY LIFE

THE AUTHOR



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THE VOICE OF LINCOLN

CHAPTER I

WHY THIS BOOK?

Most of us have a smattering of the life of Lincoln, many of us have made a general surface study of it. But Lincoln lived in the subsoil of human thought and soul. He dug down deep into every subject-matter claiming his attention. If we would know and appreciate him we too must dig down deep among the roots, the foundations, of his personal, professional, and public life.

He lived largely in the world of thought. How he thought, what his mental methods were, how he developed his great mental efficiency in law, logic, language, and public leadership, should be a matter of interest and inspiration to that great army of men and women who have learned to love Lincoln.

This is an era of efficiency. We all understand physical efficiency, industrial efficiency, financial efficiency, and the like, and rapidly we are coming to understand something of educational efficiency.

Lincoln's life is a demonstration of the highest type of efficiency for every situation he met.

How did he attain it?

Humility's child, he became humanity's man. How?

How did this backwoods boy become a master of men?

How did he pass from the pioneer life, with all the privation and primitiveness of the frontier, and grow

to be the greatest lawyer of his State, the greatest orator of his day, and the greatest statesman of his age?

In short, what was the paramount philosophy of his life, as gathered from what he said, from what he did, from how he lived and how he died?

To answer some of these questions, as they have not been answered heretofore, is the primary and paramount purpose of this volume.

To this end I have selected and assembled from the authenticated records as compiled by others the significant and symptomatic facts of his life, and have examined carefully his words and works.

I want to present what I conceive to be, not merely his creed but his code of conduct, with his chart, compass, and chain; and how he used this chart, compass, and chain in each day's duties, particularly as a lawyer at Springfield and as President at Washington.

But more important than all else is to present to young America, and to the world, our type of true Americanism.

History, after all, is only the sum of big biography, the product of the leadership and life of the great men with benevolent ideas and ideals that preserve and promote our American institutions, our spirit of liberty and democracy practically applied.

We can best study Americanism through some great American, and in the foregoing respects, by common consent, at home and abroad, the name of Lincoln leads all the rest. We are told that the world must be made "safe for democracy."

But what is democracy? Who better understood and expressed it than Lincoln? What were his views on government, its powers, its purposes? That is, what did Lincoln himself say about it?

CHAPTER II

LINCOLN'S PASSION FOR KNOWLEDGE

"A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength."—Proverbs 24 : 5.

WITHIN a twelvemonth, within a circle described by a fifty-mile radius, there were born in the State of Kentucky two boys destined to be the great popular leaders on the opposite sides of a great cause—Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis.

When quite young, Davis moved south to Mississippi, to slavery and aristocracy; Lincoln moved north to Indiana and Illinois, to liberty and democracy. Had their routes been reversed, then what?

Davis was educated at a college in Mississippi, Transylvania University at Lexington, Ky., and later was graduated at West Point.

Lincoln never spent a day in a *public* school or college.

How, then, did he become the leading lawyer of Illinois, the only man of his State who dared to debate with Douglas?

How did he become the logician at Cooper Union, the orator at Gettysburg, the emancipator of a race, the savior of a country, and the idol of the patriotic world?

Great men, as a rule, have had great mothers rather than great fathers. This was peculiarly true as to Lincoln. Though his mother died when he was but nine

years of age, she had given him the blessings of her meagre education, had helped him to read and write, had inspired him with a love for learning, and left such mental and moral impress upon the lad that he afterward said:

"All that I am and all that I hope to be, I owe to my angel mother. Blessings on her memory."

Herndon,* in his biography, relates an intimate talk that he once had with Lincoln concerning the latter's mother:

"She was the daughter of Lucy Hanks and a well-bred but obscure Virginia farmer or planter, and he (Lincoln) argued that from this last source came his power of analysis, his logic, his mental activity, his ambition, and all the qualities that distinguished him from the other members and descendants of the Hanks family." †

Perhaps the longest personal statement he ever made concerning himself was made to J. W. Fell, in 1859, in his own handwriting:

"I was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin county, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year,

* I shall very often quote from William H. Herndon's biography of Lincoln in two volumes. This biography furnishes the basis of Lincoln's life until he became President of the United States, and furnishes the basis of most of the reliable facts of Lincoln's life as used by other biographers.

Members of Herndon's family lived in and about New Salem, and Herndon himself became acquainted with Lincoln shortly after he entered the State Legislature at Springfield. He was the junior partner of Lincoln from 1843 until March 4, 1861. Taken altogether, he had unusual opportunities to know and study Abraham Lincoln, and to write about him at first hand. Moreover, no one ever accused Herndon of overstating anything in Lincoln's favor.

† Vol. I, p. 3.

was of a family by the name of Hanks. . . . My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham county, Virginia, to Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where, a year or two later, he was killed by the Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest.

"My father (Thomas Lincoln) at the death of his father was but six years of age. By the early death of his father, and the very narrow circumstances of his mother, he was, even in childhood, a wandering, laboring boy, and grew up literally without education. He never did more in the way of writing than bunglingly to write his own name. . . . He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer county, Indiana, in my eighth year. . . . It was a wild region, with many bears and other animals still in the woods. . . . There were some schools, so-called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cipherin' to the rule of three.' If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood he was looked upon as a wizard. . . . Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three. But that was all. . . . The little advance I now have upon this store of education I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

"I was raised to farm work . . . till I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois,—Macon county. Then I got to New Salem, . . . where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk war; and I was elected captain of a volunteer company, a success that gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went into the

campaign—was elated—ran for the Legislature the same year (1832), and was beaten—the only time I ever have been beaten by the people. The next, and three succeeding biennial elections, I was elected to the Legislature. I was not a candidate afterward. During the legislative period I had studied law and removed to Springfield to practice it. In 1846 I was elected to the lower house of Congress. Was not a candidate for re-election. From 1849 to 1854, inclusive, practised law more assiduously than ever before. Always a Whig in politics, and generally on the Whig electoral tickets, making active canvasses. I was losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again.

"If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said that I am in height six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected."

An unusually modest estimate of one who within a year was to be elected President of the United States.

This scarcely reads like the story of one who had a "*passion* for *knowledge*."

After Lincoln's nomination for the presidency, he was repeatedly requested to furnish for his friends and biographers the story of his life.

One of the earliest to arrive at Springfield, Ill., was J. L. Scripps of the Chicago *Tribune*, a paper very friendly to Lincoln. Scripps wanted to prepare and publish the story of his life.

"Why, Scripps," said he, "it is a great piece of folly to attempt to make anything out of me or my early

life. It can all be condensed into a single sentence, and that sentence you will find in Gray's 'Elegy.'

"'The short and simple annals of the poor.

"That's my life and that's all that you or anybody else can make out of it." *

For the purpose of knowing more about the metal in his making, than this modest man has himself given us, a fuller statement will be made of his earlier as well as later days.

Lincoln was born in a log cabin of Kentucky, near Hodgenville—a cabin that was doorless, windowless, and floorless. Oh, of course, it had a floor. It was dirt furnished by good old Mother Earth.

If there was any log cabin in Kentucky ruder or more primitive than the Lincoln cabin, it has not been discovered.

But few incidents of consequence occurred in Kentucky that are really important or indicative of character in the boy's life. He several times heard Parson Elkins preach, the Baptist minister of that circuit. The probabilities are this gave him his first inspiration for public speaking.

As to schools, they were few and four miles at least from home. Two or three months at most would cover the entire time at irregular intervals that he received the benefit of even the most elementary teachers.

When young Abraham was but seven, the Lincoln family moved to what is now Spencer County, in southern Indiana, just north of the Ohio River.

The first family residence in Indiana was but little,

* Herndon, vol. I, p. 2.

if any, improvement over the home in Kentucky. It was scarcely creditable to a carpenter's handiwork

Herndon says:

"The structure when completed was fourteen feet square and was built of small unhewn logs. In the language of the day it was called a 'half faced camp,' being enclosed on all sides but one. It had neither floor, door, nor windows. In this forbidding hovel these doughty emigrants braved the exposure of the varying seasons for an entire year. At the end of that time Thomas and Betsy Sparrow followed, bringing with them Dennis Hanks and to them Thomas Lincoln surrendered the 'half faced camp' while he moved into a more pretentious structure,—a cabin enclosed on all sides." *

This cabin is further described by Herndon as follows:

"It was of hewed logs, and was eighteen feet square. It was high enough to admit of a loft, where Abe slept, and to which he ascended each night by means of pegs driven in the wall. The rude furniture was in keeping with the surroundings. Three-legged stools answered for chairs. The bedstead, made of poles fastened in the cracks of the logs on one side, and supported by a crotched stick driven in the ground floor on the other, was covered with skins, leaves, and old clothes. A table of the same finish as the stools, a few pewter dishes, a Dutch oven, and a skillet completed the household outfit. In this uninviting frontier structure the future President was destined to pass the greater part of his boyhood." †

Holland confirms this account in the following language:

* Herndon, vol. I, p. 19. † Herndon, vol. I, p. 20.

"It is very difficult for any one bred in the older communities of the country to appreciate the extreme humility of border life, the meagerness and meanness of its household appointments, and the paucity of its stimulants to mental growth and social development. The bed in which the elder Lincolns, and, on very cold nights, the little Lincolns, slept, during their first years in Indiana, was one whose rudeness will give a key to the kind of life which they lived there. The head and one side of the bedstead were formed by an angle of the cabin itself. The bed-post standing out into the room was a single crotch, cut from the forest. Laid upon this crotch were the ends of two hickory sticks, whose other extremities were morticed into the logs, the two sides of the cabin and the two rails embracing a quadrilateral space of the required dimensions. This was bridged by slats 'rived' from the forest log, and on the slats was laid a sack filled with dried leaves. This was, in reality, the bed of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln." *

In the midst of such primitive and unfavorable surroundings, the boy really began his mental and moral development: Not at any private school for boys, not at any academy, college, high school, or even the most elementary public school, but solely with the help of his mother, the few books that he could borrow in the neighborhood, and occasionally some transient teacher for a month or two.

Some still small voice within seemed to command him like Paul did Timothy of old:

"Stir the gift of God which is within thee."

What these gifts were and how he stirred them in his boyhood life should be of special interest.

* Holland, p. 28.

Somehow or other in some quarters Lincoln has been regarded as the accident of genius, as a mere backwoods boor, ignorant and unschooled, but *providentially endowed in some miraculous way*, with uncommon common sense, with almost divine wisdom, with a genius for logic and language that persuaded men against their will, and a godlike prescience.

Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The greatest gift with which nature endowed him, that was practically the parent of all others, was not a mere desire for knowledge, a thirst for truth, but a perfect passion for learning, for knowledge.

It would be unsafe to judge most men upon their own estimates. The bill of lading would surprisingly exceed the quality and quantity of goods delivered. Not so with Lincoln.

And as it is the purpose of this volume merely to interpret Lincoln from what he has said, from what he has done, I shall give here his own version of his "passion for knowledge."

After his delivery of the great Cooper Institute speech in New York, February 27, 1860, he made a short trip through New England, in which he aroused great public interest, both as to the man and his message.

A leading paper contained the following interview with him:

"Well, as to education, the newspapers are correct. I never went to school more than six months in my life. I can say this: that among my earliest recollections I remember how, when a mere child, I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way that I could not understand. I can remember going to my little bedroom, after hearing the neighbors talk of an

evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night trying to make out what was the exact meaning of some of their, to me, dark sayings.

"I could not sleep, although I tried to, when I got on such a hunt for an idea until I had caught it; and when I thought I had got it I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over again, until I had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me, and it has stuck by me; for I am never easy now, when I am handling a thought, until I have bounded it north and bounded it south and bounded it east and bounded it west." *

No simpler, stronger statement could be made of his paramount passion for knowledge, his self-reliant methods of research and reason upon his own resources.†

* Curtis, p. 59.

† Doctor E. C. Moore, formerly professor of education in Harvard University, in his treatise on "What is Education," at page 24 says: "Education is determined by what the student does. A single subject which has been pursued in such a way that he has learned to stand on his own feet, and use his own mind in the getting and solving of its problems provides a more real education than a whole college course in which one has merely endeavored to appropriate the thoughts of other men, or tried to become a thinker without thinking about anything which seemed to require thought."

CHAPTER III

LINCOLN'S PASSION FOR KNOWLEDGE

(CONTINUED)

LINCOLN was his own schoolmaster in the rudiments of knowledge, in law, and in government. What a teacher! What a pupil! What results!

This master man gave us his method, and his formula of self-education in the interview just quoted. Later in a succeeding chapter, in his advice to a law student, he tells us to "work, work, work." No matter what the educational method may be, in its last analysis it will be found, as Euclid said: "There is no royal road to learning."

Let us examine Lincoln's own formula as to its elements, and as to where and how he applied them.

Now, where did Lincoln "hunt" for his ideas? What did he repeat over and over again and put in language "plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend," and where did he get the thoughts which he says he "bounded north and bounded south and bounded east and bounded west," as appeared in the New York interview cited in the last chapter?

He was as poor in number of books as he was rich in the nature of books. His library, chiefly borrowed, was composed of the Bible, Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," "Æsop's Fables," DeFoe's "Robinson Crusoe," Weems's "Life of Washington," a "History of the United States" and the dictionary.

And yet what a library for a liberal and efficient education—at least the foundation of an education. What boy ever had a better set of text-books for learning and language, for conscience and character, than these?

These books he read and reread, studied and restudied, until he knew them from cover to cover. He literally devoured them and assimilated them into his mind, as he assimilated food into his body.

While working in the field at odd moments, or between errands in the home, or between customers in the store, whenever he had a leisure moment, the Bible, or Bunyan, or the dictionary was always at his elbow.

In addition to these books he was a constant and regular reader of the best newspapers of the day.

Herndon* says:

"He was a careful and patient reader of newspapers, the *Sangamon Journal*—published at Springfield—Louisville *Journal*, St. Louis *Republican*, and Cincinnati *Gazette* being usually within his reach."

Abe not only had the handicap of no schools in the neighborhood, no books in the home, but also the lack of interest, and even opposition, of the father to his employment in books rather than in the field.

As appears in Lincoln's written statement to Fell in the preceding chapter:

"He, the father, grew up literally without education. He never did more in the way of writing than bunglingly to write his own name." (His wife had taught him to do this.)

This illiteracy upon the part of the father exhibited itself in a strong opposition to the boy's education. The father's general shiftlessness and business inef-

* Vol. I, p. 104.

ficiency made constant demands upon the big, hardy boy to work, not only in the father's fields when he ought to have been at school, but also to work at wage for the neighbors in order to furnish funds for the father's deficiencies.

I am entirely aware that Doctor Holland takes the opposite view.

He says:

"Among the most untoward circumstances Thomas Lincoln embraced every opportunity to give Abraham an education."

The overwhelming evidence is to the contrary, as shown in almost every other leading biography.

Herndon* says:

"Abe's love for books, and his determined effort to obtain an education in spite of so many obstacles, induced the belief in his father's mind, that book-learning was absorbing a greater proportion of his energy and industry than the demands of the farm. The old gentleman had but little faith in the value of books or papers, and hence the frequent drafts he made on the son to aid in the drudgery of daily toil."

Mrs. Thomas Lincoln, in a statement made under date of September 8, 1865, as noted by Herndon, says:

"I induced my husband to permit Abe to read and study at home as well as at school. At first he was not easily reconciled to it, but finally he too seemed willing to encourage him to a certain extent."

Indeed, this was the chief bone of unpleasantness between father and son, and they never afterward seemed to sustain that affectionate relation that Abraham's nature, deportment, and rapid rise to fame should have abundantly justified.

* Vol. I, p. 33.

Lincoln himself evidently refers to the strained relations between him and the father in a letter that he wrote to John Johnston, a stepbrother, in 1851, just prior to his father's death.

In this letter he said, among other things:

". . . You already know I desire that neither father nor mother shall be in want of any comfort, either in health or sickness, while they live; and I feel sure you have not failed to use my name, if necessary, to procure a doctor or any thing else for father in his present sickness. My business is such that I could hardly leave home now, if it were not, as it is, that my own wife is sick-a-bed. . . . I sincerely hope father may yet recover his health; but, at all events, tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our great and good and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads; and he will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in him. Say to him, that if we could meet now, it is doubtful whether it would not be more painful than pleasant; but that, if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous meeting with loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us, through the help of God, hope ere long to join them.

"Write me again when you receive this.

"Affectionately,

"A. LINCOLN."

When the boy was in his tenth year, his dear devoted mother died. Within a year or two the father took unto himself another wife, a widow by the name of Sarah Bush Johnston, who then lived in Kentucky.

She had been courted by Thomas Lincoln before he had married Nancy Hanks.

The coming of Sarah Bush Johnston into the Illinois home made a great change. The home, through her effort and insistence, was greatly improved, as far as their means would allow. The boy was again given a mother's care, and as already noted, the new mother overcame much of the opposition of the father against the education of young Abraham. More than that, this stepmother read and studied with him, and contrary to the usual rule, there was a sweeter, tenderer relation between them than there was between her and her own children.

Herndon* gives us a very clear and detailed account of the influence of the second Mrs. Lincoln upon their primitive home in Indiana. He says:

"The new Mrs. Lincoln was accompanied by her three children, John, Sarah, and Matilda. Her social status is fixed by the comparison of a neighbor, who observed that 'life among the Hankses, the Lincolns, and the *Enlows* was a long ways below life among the Bushes.'

"In the eyes of her spouse she could not be regarded as a poor widow. She was the owner of a goodly stock of furniture and household goods; bringing with her among other things a walnut bureau valued at fifty dollars. What effect the new family, their collection of furniture, cooking utensils, and comfortable bedding must have had on the astonished and motherless pair who from the door of Thomas Lincoln's forlorn cabin watched the well-filled wagon as it came creaking through the woods can better be imagined than described. Surely Sarah and Abe, as the stores of supplies were rolled in through the doorless doorways,

*Vol. I, p. 27.

must have believed that a golden future awaited them. The presence and smile of a motherly face in the cheerless cabin radiated sunshine into every neglected corner. If the Lincoln mansion did not in every respect correspond to the representations made by its owner to the new Mrs. Lincoln before marriage, the latter gave no expression of disappointment or even surprise. With true womanly courage and zeal she set resolutely to work to make right that which seemed wrong. Her husband was made to put a floor in the cabin, as well as to supply doors and windows. The cracks between the logs were plastered up. A clothes-press filled the space between the chimney jamb and the wall, and the mat of corn husks and leaves on which the children had slept in the corner gave way to the comfortable luxuriance of a feather bed. She washed the two orphans, and fitted them out in clothes taken from the stores of her own. The work of renovation in and around the cabin continued until even Thomas Lincoln himself, under the general stimulus of the new wife's presence, caught the inspiration, and developed signs of intense activity. The advent of Sarah Bush was certainly a red-letter day for the Lincolns. She was not only industrious and thrifty, but gentle and affectionate; and her newly adopted children for the first time, perhaps, realized the benign influence of a mother's love. Of young Abe she was especially fond, and we have her testimony that her kindness and care for him were warmly and bountifully returned."

One of the last things done by Lincoln before he left Springfield for Washington in February, 1861, was to go out and call on his grand old stepmother, and the story of their meeting and parting is one of the sweetest, tenderest memories of his life.

This insatiable thirst for knowledge, unquenched and unquenchable, as against poverty and parental opposition, is noted frequently by his many biographers.

Herndon* says:

"The foundation for his education was laid in Indiana and in the little town of New Salem in Illinois, and in both places he gave evidence of a nature and characteristics that distinguished him from every associate and surrounding he had. He was not peculiar or eccentric, and yet a shrewd observer would have seen that he was decidedly unique and original. Although imbued with a marked dislike for manual labor (Lincoln once said that his father taught him farm work but never taught him to love it), it cannot be truthfully said of him that he was indolent. From a mental standpoint he was one of the most energetic young men of his day. He dwelt altogether in the land of thought. His deep meditation and abstraction easily induced the belief among his horny-handed companions that he was lazy. . . . His chief delight during the day, if unmolested, was to lie down under the shade of some inviting tree and read and study. At night, lying on his stomach in front of the open fireplace with a piece of charcoal he would cipher on a broad wooden shovel. . . . His stepmother told me he devoured everything in the book line within his reach. If in reading he came across anything that pleased his fancy, he entered it down in a copy-book —a sort of repository, in which he was wont to store everything worthy of preservation."

Herndon further says in the same connection:

"Whenever Abe had a chance in the field while at

* Vol. I, pp. 36–39.

work, or at the house, he would stop and read. He kept the Bible and 'Æsop's Fables' always within reach, and read them over and over again."

Even Colonel Lamon, in his biography, says:

"Abe loved to lie under a shade tree or up in the loft of the cabin and read, cipher, or scribble at night. He sat by the chimney jamb and ciphered by the light of the fire on the wooden fire shovel. When the shovel was fairly covered he would shave it off with Tom Lincoln's drawing knife and begin again. At day time he used boards for the same purpose out of doors and went through the shaving process everlastingly. His stepmother repeats often that 'He read every book that he could lay his hands on.' She says 'Abe read diligently every book he could lay his hands on and when he came across a passage that struck him he would write it down on boards if he had no paper, keep it there until he did get some paper, then he would rewrite it, repeat it. He had a kind of copy book, a scrap book in which he put down the things and thus preserved it."

Lamon further says:

"Among the books upon which Abe laid his hands were Æsop's Fables, Robinson Crusoe, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, a History of the United States and Weems's Life of Washington. All these he read many times, transferred extracts from them to the boards and the scrap book. He had procured the scrap book because most of his literature was borrowed and he thought it profitable to take copious notes from the books before he returned them. David Turnham had bought a volume of the Revised Statutes of Indiana. Lincoln borrowed this book and read it intensely."

Lamon notes a conversation he had with the wife of Allen Gentry, which was rather unusual. She said:

"I am now thoroughly satisfied that Abe knew the general laws of astronomy and the movements of the heavenly bodies. He was better read then than the world knows, or is likely to know exactly. No man could talk to me that night as he did, unless he had known something of geography as well as astronomy. He often and often commented or talked to me about what he read,—seemed to read it out of the book as he went along,—did so to others. He was the learned boy among us unlearned folks. He took great pains to explain; could do it so simply." *

"Of all these years of Abraham Lincoln's early childhood we know almost nothing. . . . He never talked of these days to his most intimate friends. . . . When Abraham was seven years of age Thomas Lincoln moved with his family to Indiana and there established a temporary shelter merely made from poles, enclosed on three sides. For a year or two it was without doors, windows or floors. At night the boy Abraham climbed to his bed in the loft, by a ladder of wooden pins driven into the logs. . . . A thirst for knowledge as a means of rising in the world was innate in him. . . . All the little learning he ever acquired he seized as a tool to better his condition. He learned his letters that he might read books and see how men in the great world outside of his woods had borne themselves in the fight for which he longed. He learned to write, first, that he might have an accomplishment his playmates had not; then that he might help his elders by writing their letters, and enjoy the feeling of usefulness which

* Nicolay and Hay, in vol. I, pp. 27, *et seq.*

this gave him; and finally that he might copy what struck him in his reading and thus make it his own for future use. . . . His attendance upon school was all told less than a year. . . . He read everything he could lay his hands upon, and he was certainly fortunate in the few books of which he became the possessor. . . . He read them over and over again until he knew them almost by heart. . . . He would sit in the twilight and read a dictionary as long as he could see. He used to go to David Turnham's, the town constable, and devour the 'Revised Statutes of Indiana,' as boys in our day do the 'Three Guardsmen.' Of the books he did not own he took voluminous notes, filling his copy-book with choice extracts, and poring over them until they were fixed in his memory. He could not afford to waste paper upon his original compositions. He would sit by the fire at night and cover the wooden shovel with essays and arithmetical exercises, which he would shave off and then begin again. It is touching to think of this great-spirited child, battling year after year against his evil star, wasting his ingenuity upon devices and makeshifts, his high intelligence starving for want of the simple appliances of education that are now offered gratis to the poorest and most indifferent."

Much more might be offered along the same line for the encouragement of the poor boy, the boy without opportunity, at least the opportunity of high school, academy, college, or university.

The devotion to his books, the thoroughness of his study, the assimilation of their contents, was most unusual. He made everything that he read and studied a part of himself. As the food he ate was assimilated into muscle, so the books he read were assimilated

into mind. His life gives added force to the old adage, "Beware of the man of few books."

The Lincoln idea was to learn the fundamentals, the basic truths of life, intellectual, moral, political; not merely to know them, but to use them for his own betterment, for the public enlightenment, to turn them to practical account, to some workable purpose.

Doctor Holland strikingly shows us what this boy did with the things he learned and digested from the few but fertile books he had.

"He became a writer also. The majority of the settlers around him were entirely illiterate, and when it became known that Mr. Lincoln's boy could write, his services were in frequent request by them in sending epistolary messages to their friends. In the composition of these letters his early habits of putting the thoughts of others as well as his own into language were formed. The exercise was, indeed, as good as a school to him; for there is no better discipline, for any mind, than that of giving definite expression to thought in language. Much of his subsequent power as a writer and speaker was undoubtedly traceable to this early discipline."

Doctor Holland further relates an instance of Abraham when only nine years of age writing a letter upon the death of his mother to good old Parson Elkins in Kentucky, from whom he got his first inspiration in public speaking, to come to their Indiana home and preach the funeral sermon in memory of his sainted mother. This the parson did some months after.

The boy's writing material was very crude. Ink was made from pokeberries, pens from feathers, and paper, which was scarce, usually found a substitute

in logs, bark, sand, shingles, and wooden shovels. Abraham would take a shingle and write on it with a piece of charcoal. After the shingle was filled he would shave it off and write on it again. So also he used the old shovel of the fireplace, writing upon its burnt wood, shaving and rewriting, until there was nothing left of the shovel. It is difficult in these times for young America with all their privileges and opportunities to realize the hardships encountered by this boy in his eager efforts to educate himself.

In addition to his letter-writing as a means of improving his thought and his language, he wrote many compositions that attracted more than casual attention from the people of the neighborhood.

Colonel Lamon, in his biography, says:

"Nat Grigsby, a boyhood friend of Lincoln, says: 'Essays and poetry were not taught in this school (refering to Crawford's). Abe took it up on his own account. He first wrote short sentences against cruelty to animals and at last came forward with a composition on the subject. He was very much annoyed and pained by the conduct of the boys who were in the habit of catching terrapins and putting coals of fire on their backs. He would write us,' Nat says, 'and tell us it was wrong and would write against it.'"

The same author further says:

"All sorts of frolics and all kinds of popular gatherings, whether for work or amusement, possessed irresistible attractions for Abe. He loved to see and be seen, to make sport and to enjoy it. It was a most important part of his education that he got at the corn-shuckings, the log-rollings, the shooting-matches, and the gay and jolly weddings of those early border times. He was the only man or boy within a wide compass

who had learning enough to furnish the literature for such occasions."

"At Gentryville 'they had exhibitions or speaking meetings.' Some of the questions they spoke on were, The Bee and the Ant, Water and Fire; another was, Which had the most right to complain, the Negro or the Indian."

"One William Wood, a boyhood friend of Abe's, says that 'Abe was in the habit of carrying (his pieces) to him for criticism and encouragement. Mr. Wood took at least two newspapers, one of them devoted to politics and one of them to temperance. Abe borrowed them both and read them faithfully over and over again, was inspired with an ardent desire to write something on the subjects of which they treated. He accordingly composed an article on Temperance, which Mr. Wood thought excelled for sound sense anything that the paper contained. Abe then tried his hand on national politics, saying that the American government was the best form of government for an intelligent people; that it ought to be kept sound and preserved forever; that general education should be fostered and carried all over the country; that the constitution should be saved, the Union perpetuated and the laws revered, respected and enforced. This article was turned over to Mr. Wood. Judge Pritchard afterwards passed that way, read the article, and said 'The world can't beat it.' It was afterwards published in some local paper."

This was written when the boy was but seventeen years of age.

On Monday mornings he would mount a stump and deliver in substance the sermon that he had heard the day before. His taste for public speaking seemed not

only natural but was most pronounced at a very early age. His stepsister Matilda Johnston says:

"He was an indefatigable preacher. When Father and Mother would go to church Abe would take down the Bible, read a verse, give out a hymn and we would sing. Abe was then about fifteen years of age. He preached and we would do the crying. Sometimes he would join in the chorus of tears. One day my brother, John Johnston, threw a land terrapin against a tree and crushed the shell. It suffered much. Abe then preached against cruelty to animals contending that an ant's life was as sweet to it as ours to us."

After reaching New Salem, when twenty-two years of age, one of the first things he did was to join the "New Salem Literary Society." The president, Mr. R. B. Rutledge spoke of Lincoln's debates as follows:

"He pursued the questions with reason and argument so pithy and forcible that all were amazed."

While here he frequently walked to Booneville court-house to observe and study the trial of cases.

It was at New Salem within a week from his arrival that he met the village schoolmaster, Mentor Graham, who exercised a most wholesome and intellectual influence on the young man, not only giving him books to study, but aiding him in their study, and strongly advising him to study grammar. Lincoln walked six miles to borrow a copy of Kirkham's grammar and with Graham's help he succeeded in mastering it in six weeks. His comment was that if that was science he thought he could "subdue" another.

Herndon, at page 112, quotes the schoolmaster Graham as saying:

"He (Lincoln) studied to see the subject-matter clearly, and to express it truly and strongly. I have

known him to study for hours the best way of three to express an idea."

The fact of the matter is he was one of the busiest boys in all the neighborhood, with his quills, pokeberry juice, scraps of paper, charcoal and shingles, scrapbooks, compositions, debate, talking from stumps to the trees as an audience, reading and repeating over and over again until he had memorized the contents, of books, sermons, and speeches, and could reproduce them verbatim.

Mental power does not come from mere knowledge, but rather in the ability to practically use that knowledge. As child and youth he was constantly engaged not only in acquiring knowledge, but in arranging the same and putting it in appropriate phrase and formula for future use.

Our public schools and colleges seem to neglect this important and useful branch of practical education and mental discipline. I fear the essentials of the old literary society have come and gone until public opinion shall call them back.

It was one of the biggest factors in the intellectual product of this man. He was organizing and attending literary societies, participating in what he called "practising polemics" in and about Gentryville, in and about New Salem, and even after he got to Springfield as a member of the State Legislature, he, with others, organized a Lyceum, in the autumn of 1836, and delivered before that organization in January, 1837, a remarkable speech on "The Perpetuation of our Political Institutions." This speech will be discussed in a later chapter.

Lincoln was not a man of ordinary desires, ordinary tastes, ordinary likes and dislikes. He was, for the

most part, extraordinary in these respects. He had passions for things, and no passion of his life was stronger than his passion for knowledge—save one. What was that one? His *passion for justice.*

These two passions were ever present and prevailing throughout his personal and public life.

CHAPTER IV

HIS PASSION FOR JUSTICE

"And behold there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man and a just."—St. Luke 23 : 50.

JUSTICE, as here used is the broad generic word and its associated attributes, such as gentleness, helpfulness, gratitude, truthfulness, honesty, and the like—to every man his due.

It embraces those qualities of character, which the world admires when it pays tribute to a just man.

As we have already seen, Lincoln while unschooled, as a boy, was everything but uneducated. Where in all Indiana could he have found a schoolmaster as great as himself? Where could he have found a school that could have given the time to study, to repetition in repeating over and over again his reading and writing, where could he have found a school with such text-books as the Bible, Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," "Æsop's Fables," DeFoe's "Robinson Crusoe," and the like?

Just as he was without the opportunity of regular attendance upon the day-school, so he was also without the opportunity of attendance upon Sunday-school and upon church and Bible class. And yet there was no book to which he devoted so much time, study, analysis and application of its great truths as he did to the Bible.

As Herndon has well said: "This book was nearly always at his elbow."

Its parables and proverbs furnished a plan and spec-

ifications for many a Lincoln address. Indeed, in the vast majority of Lincoln's public speeches, in early as well as later life, we find cropping out, yes, we find as the corner-stone of his simple, strong arguments, the Holy Bible or the Declaration of Independence, or both.

It is an old saying that "Coming events cast their shadows before."

The early experiences and expressions of boyhood ofttimes forecast the coming man.

Let us note a few of the symptomatic incidents of Lincoln's boyhood, as showing the presence of this pronounced passion for justice.

Nicolay and Hay* relate this interesting incident of the boy's life in Kentucky. He was then only a child not exceeding seven years of age. When asked for any recollection he had of the War of 1812–1815, Mr. Lincoln once said:

"Nothing but this. I had been fishing one day and caught a little fish which I was taking home. I met a soldier in the road, and having been always told at home that we must be good to the soldiers, I gave him my fish."

These same authors observe:

"This is only a faint glimpse but what it shows is rather pleasant—the generous child and the patriotic household."

I have already noted his talks to the boys and girls against cruelty to animals, especially a common practice in that neighborhood of putting coals of fire on the backs of turtles.

Later he prepared a composition on this subject that received neighborhood prominence.

* Vol. I, p. 27.

Herndon relates several interesting incidents touching his passion for justice.

One day his stepsister, Matilda Johnston, a mere girl, followed Abe into the woods. Running hurriedly after him, she crept up, catlike, behind him and jumped on his back; planting her knee in the middle of his back, she threw him over backward, the axe that he was carrying so falling as to cut the girl's ankle as she fell, and there was a general flow of blood. Abe tore off a part of his shirt for a bandage and stopped the blood. Thereafter the boy, Abe, said to Tilda:

"What are you going to tell mother about getting hurt?"

"Tell her I did it with the ax," she sobbed. "That will be the truth, won't it?"

To which last inquiry Abe manfully responded:

"Yes, that is the truth, but it is not all the truth. Tell the whole truth, Tilda, and trust to your good mother for the rest."

Another incident related by Herndon shows the inner nature of this boy.*

It was during the moving from Indiana to Illinois, while crossing a frozen stream which had to be forded by the yoke of oxen hauling the effects of the Lincoln family. Herndon says:

"Among other things which the party brought with them was a pet dog, which trotted along after the wagon. One day the little fellow fell behind and failed to catch up till after they had crossed the stream. Missing him they looked back, and there, on the opposite bank, he stood, whining and jumping about in great distress. The water was running over the broken edges of the ice, and the poor animal was

* Herndon, vol. I, p. 59.

afraid to cross. It would not pay to turn the oxen and wagon back and ford the stream again in order to recover a dog, and so the majority, in their anxiety to move forward, decided to go on without him. 'But I could not endure the idea of abandoning even a dog,' related Lincoln. 'Pulling off shoes and socks I waded across the stream and triumphantly returned with the shivering animal under my arm. His frantic leaps of joy and other evidences of a dog's gratitude amply repaid me for all the exposure I had undergone.'"

Holland records several incidents of a like nature:

"One evening, while returning from a 'raising' in his wide neighborhood, with a number of companions, he discovered a straying horse, with saddle and bridle upon him. The horse was recognized as belonging to a man who was accustomed to excess in drink, and it was suspected at once that the owner was not far off. A short search only was necessary to confirm the suspicions of the young men. The poor drunkard was found in a perfectly helpless condition, upon the chilly ground. Abraham's companions urged the cowardly policy of leaving him to his fate, but young Lincoln would not hear to the proposition. At his request, the miserable sot was lifted to his shoulders, and he actually carried him eighty rods to the nearest house. Sending word to his father that he should not be back that night, with the reason for his absence, he attended and nursed the man until the morning, and had the pleasure of believing that he had saved his life."

Again he says:

"He (Lincoln) was riding by a deep slough, in which, to his exceeding pain, he saw a pig struggling, and with such faint efforts that it was evident that he could

not extricate himself from the mud. Mr. Lincoln looked at the pig and the mud which enveloped him, and then looked at some new clothes with which he had but a short time before enveloped himself. Deciding against the claims of the pig, he rode on, but he could not get rid of the vision of the poor brute, and, at last, after riding two miles, he turned back, determined to rescue the animal at the expense of his new clothes. Arrived at the spot, he tied his horse, and coolly went to work to build of old rails a passage to the bottom of the hole. Descending on these rails, he seized the pig and dragged him out, but not without serious damage to the clothes he wore. Washing his hands in the nearest brook, and wiping them on the grass, he mounted his gig and rode along. He then fell to examining the motive that sent him back to the release of the pig. At the first thought it seemed to be pure benevolence, but, at length, he came to the conclusion that it was selfishness, for he certainly went to the pig's relief in order (as he said to the friend to whom he related the incident) to 'take a pain out of his own mind.' This is certainly a new view of the nature of sympathy, and one which it will be well for the casuist to examine."

Many more incidents of a similar nature, showing a variety of his kind, helpful, and generous instincts toward man and brute, might be related in these pages and not without profit. But this is sufficient to show the kind of boy we are dealing with, who was to become the kind of man we find later at Springfield, as lawyer, and at Washington, as President.

No boy was such a welcome guest in every neighborhood in which he lived as the boy Abe. He was always doing chores for the good women of the community,

helping with the work about the house, taking care of their children, and making himself generally useful. But on such occasions he was never without a book to engage his spare moments. And even when rocking the primitive cradles of those days to help the busy mother, Lincoln could be found with a foot on the rocker and a book in his hand.

Notwithstanding the keen and noble sense of obligation to his father, because he was his father, the last year or two in Indiana found the boy exceedingly restive and dissatisfied. He talked the matter over with his neighbors about leaving home and beginning life for himself. They advised him to stay until he had reached his majority, and then he would feel perfectly free to emancipate himself. This he did.

Indeed, after the family moved to Macon, Illinois, he remained with them a year in helping with the new cabin, building fences, ploughing the new land, putting in and cultivating and harvesting the crops.

He remained in that section doing odd jobs at farm work until August, 1831, when he went to New Salem, which opened up a new era for the ambitious youth, now twenty-two years of age.

At this time he was a giant in size and strength, six feet four, weight one hundred and eighty pounds; and numerous biographers relate the fact to be that he could lift six hundred pounds.

His remarkable physical strength gave him great prominence in the various communities in which he lived, and no place more than at New Salem.

One witness declares he was equal to three men, having on a certain occasion carried a load of six hundred pounds. At another time he walked away with

a pair of logs which three robust men were sceptical of their ability to carry.

"He could strike with a maul a heavier blow, could sink an axe deeper into wood than any man I ever saw," says another witness.

Having a giant's strength, he, however, refused to use it as the average giant does. He was no "bully."

Lincoln's early life in New Salem is full of interesting events. But I shall record only those significant ones that show the inner man.

He was employed by Denton Offut, one of the village merchants, as a clerk in a general store. This gave him additional acquaintance with the people in a large neighborhood, and also furnished him ample leisure, day and night, for pursuing his studies. He still continued to read and study everything he could get his hands on that seemed worth while.

While here, he met the notorious Jack Armstrong, the leader of the Clary's Grove boys. The Armstrong contest is worthy of mention in some detail.

Offut had wagered with Bill Clary, one of the gang, that Lincoln was a "better man" than Jack Armstrong.

Herndon describes the contest as follows:

"The new clerk strongly opposed this sort of an introduction, but after much entreaty from Offut, at last consented to make his bow to the social lions of the town in this unusual way. He was now six feet four inches high, and weighed, as his friend and confidant, William Greene tells us with impressive precision, 'two hundred and fourteen pounds.' The contest was to be a friendly one and fairly conducted. All New Salem adjourned to the scene of the wrestle. Money, whiskey, knives, and all manner of property

were staked on the result. It is unnecessary to go into details of the encounter. Every one knows how it ended; how at last the tall angular rail-splitter, enraged at the suspicion of foul tactics, and profiting by his height and the length of his arms, fairly lifted the great bully by the throat and shook him like a rag; how by this act he established himself solidly in the esteem of all New Salem, and secured the respectful admiration and friendship of the very man whom he had so thoroughly vanquished. From this time forward Jack Armstrong, his wife Hannah, and all the other Armstrongs became his warm and trusted friends." *

On another occasion, while acting as clerk in the Offut store, Lincoln was waiting upon several ladies who were making some purchases of calico. The bully at once began to talk in an offensive and profane manner in the presence of the ladies. Lincoln leaned over the counter and begged him to stop. The incident as related by Holland is as follows:

"The bully retorted that the opportunity had come for which he had long sought, and he would like to see the man who could hinder him from saying anything he might choose to say. Lincoln, still cool, told him that if he would wait until the ladies retired, he would hear what he had to say, and give him any satisfaction he desired. As soon as the women were gone, the man became furious. Lincoln heard his boasts and his abuse for a time, and finding that he was not to be put off without a fight, said—'Well, if you must be whipped, I suppose I may as well whip you as any other man.' This was just what the bully had been seeking, he said, so out of doors they went, and Lin-

* Herndon, vol. I, p. 74.

coln made short work with him. He threw him upon the ground, held him there as if he had been a child, and gathering some 'smart-weed' which grew upon the spot, rubbed it into his face and eyes, until the fellow bellowed with pain. Lincoln did all this without a particle of anger, and when the job was finished, went immediately for water, washed his victim's face, and did everything he could to alleviate his distress. Thereafter the two men became great friends."

Much as Lincoln regretted experiences of this character, he was fully persuaded that the eminent justice of the situation called for a vigorous discipline of the offender. It was a case of being cruel only to be kind.

This passion for justice made him likewise an honest boy and an honest man, and he became known while a clerk in the store at New Salem, and for many years thereafter as "Honest Abe."

Holland has preserved two incidents illustrative of this trait of his character:

"On one occasion he sold a woman a little bill of goods amounting in value, by the reckoning, to two dollars and six and a quarter cents. He received the money, and the woman went away. On adding the items of the bill again, to make himself sure of correctness, he found that he had taken six and a quarter cents too much. It was night, and closing and locking the store, he started out on foot, a distance of two or three miles, for the house of his defrauded customer, and delivering over to her the sum whose possession had so much troubled him, went home satisfied. On another occasion, just as he was closing the store for the night, a woman entered, and asked for half a pound of tea. The tea was weighed out and paid for, and the store was left for the night. The next morning,

Abraham entered to begin the duties of the day, when he discovered a four-ounce weight on the scales. He saw at once that he had made a mistake, and, shutting the store, he took a long walk before breakfast to deliver the remainder of the tea."

These circumstances are small in and of themselves, but they are simply the outcropping of a great, big, just, honest, conscientious nature, and were as much a part of Abraham Lincoln as his arms and his legs.

A similar incident occurred after he began the practice of law at Springfield. Uncle Sam had never asked any accounting of Lincoln during his term as postmaster at New Salem, which began in 1833.

Some years afterward, when Lincoln was practising law at Springfield, a post-office inspector from the Federal Government appeared and advised Lincoln that he was indebted to Uncle Sam in the amount of seventeen dollars and some odd cents. Mr. Lincoln thought a moment, went to an old trunk, unknotted an old rag that he had tied up years before, and therein produced the exact number of dollars and cents which he had correctly reckoned, tied up in this old rag, and put away in his old trunk, so that, when Uncle Sam was ready for the accounting, he, Lincoln, was ready to pay to the very last penny.

As he gave the money to the inspector he said:

"I never use any man's money but my own."

Nicolay and Hay, vol. I, page 120, speak of this passion for justice that was generally recognized by everybody that knew him as an essential part of the boy Lincoln:

"He was continually called on to serve in the most incongruous capacities. Old residents say he was the

best judge at a horse-race the county afforded; he was occasionally a second in a duel of fisticuffs, though he usually contrived to reconcile the adversaries on the turf before any damage was done; he was the arbiter on all controverted points of literature, science, or woodcraft among the disputatious denizens of Clary's Grove, and his decisions were never appealed from. His native tact and humor were invaluable in his work as a peacemaker, and his enormous physical strength, which he always used with a magnanimity rare among giants, placed his offhand decrees beyond the reach of contemptuous question. He composed differences among friends and equals with good-natured raillery, but he was as rough as need be when his wrath was roused by meanness and cruelty."

Holland also speaks of this general confidence that the public universally had in his sense of fairness and justice:

"Every one trusted him. It was while he was performing the duties of the store that he acquired the sobriquet 'Honest Abe'—a characterization that he never dishonored, and an abbreviation that he never outgrew. He was judge, arbitrator, referee, umpire, authority, in all disputes, games, and matches of man-flesh, and horse-flesh; a pacificator in all quarrels; everybody's friend; the best natured, the most sensible, the best informed, the most modest and unassuming, the kindest, gentlest, roughest, strongest, best young fellow in all New Salem and the region round about."

Many more of the symptomatic facts of his childhood and youth might be here recorded to forecast the foundation of the character of this just boy and man.

Later, throughout his keen, competitive life as a

lawyer and political leader, he clung fast to the ideals of justice of his boyhood. Every controversy, personal, professional, or political, had first to be tried out in God's court.

What do I mean?

The first court of justice was established by God Almighty. Wherever he established a man he established a court, because he put the court in the man. The most instantaneous, automatic, infallible, human function known is that of conscience. From the primitive man to the most civilized, conscience has so corrected and chastised our conduct that if the promptings of the still small voice are followed, human nature does not go far wrong.

In this court there are no technical rules of substantive law, of pleading, of evidence. Everything is reduced to the simple formula: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

And in the essentials of life it is amazing how our intelligence accepts the judgment of conscience as wise and just, without even the suggestion of an appeal.

As there are no technical rules in this court, so there are no delays. The truth being presented, the justness or unjustness of any contemplated action is at once determined.

Every controversy of Lincoln, as layman, lawyer, or leader, had first to receive the sanction of this court. If it failed to secure the judgment of the court of conscience, no matter what financial sacrifices were involved, no matter what friendships were at stake, no matter what political issues might be affected, Lincoln refused to have anything further to do with such controversy. Conscience having rejected it, Lincoln rejected it, and so far as he was concerned it was at an end.

CHAPTER V

LINCOLN ENTERS POLITICS

The day the Lincolns moved from Indiana into Macon County, Illinois, was an eventful one for young Abraham. He was then twenty-one years of age.

For some years he had longed for the day of his majority, when he might be free to follow his own bent, to begin his own life in his own way, free from paternal interference.

A year and more he spent in and about that neighborhood in farm work, still, however, employing all leisure time in pursuing his studies. He also, during this time, devoted some months to boating upon the Sangamon and the Ohio Rivers.

Finally he landed at New Salem, in Sangamon County, as he himself says, as "a piece of driftwood."

A new day, however, had now dawned for Abraham Lincoln, and within ten days from the time he arrived at this little town of some twenty homes and one hundred inhabitants he received his first public job. An interesting account of this incident is given in Tarbell's Biography:*

"The village schoolmaster, Mentor Graham by name, was clerk at this particular election, but his assistant was ill. Looking about for some one to help him, Mr. Graham saw a tall stranger loitering around the polling place and called to him: 'Can you write?' 'Yes,' said the stranger, 'I can make a few rabbit

* Vol. I, p. 61.

tracks.' Mr. Graham was evidently satisfied with the answer, as he promptly initiated him."

This was his first public position.

At the close of the day he was no longer a stranger in New Salem. His pleasing manner, entertaining stories, and efficient service became the talk of the neighborhood and won for him the lasting friendship of the village schoolmaster, who henceforth played no unimportant part in the intellectual development of young Lincoln.

While clerking in Offut's store Lincoln conceived the idea of becoming a candidate for the general assembly of Illinois, and accordingly in March, 1832, he issued to the people of Sangamon County his first political circular.

Inasmuch as this is really the beginning of the politician and the statesman, that circular becomes a matter of prime and unusual interest to one following the evolution of Abraham Lincoln.

As an index to the mind, character, and ambition of this twenty-three-year-old unschooled youth, this circular furnished instructive and undoubted evidence.

It contained about two thousand words, setting forth his views on the important issues of the day.

I am entirely aware that Mr. Herndon calls it a mere "literary fulmination," and otherwise speaks slightingly of it.

On the other hand, Nicolay and Hay, in their great work, say:

"This is almost precisely the style of his later years. The errors of grammar and construction which spring invariably from an effort to avoid redundancy of expression remained with him through life. He seemed

to grudge the space required for necessary parts of speech. But his language was at twenty-three, as it was thirty years later, the simple and manly attire of his thought, with little attempt at ornament and none at disguise."

The circular is as follows:

"To the People of Sangamon County.

"Fellow-Citizens,—Having become a candidate for the honorable office of one of your Representatives in the next General Assembly of this State, in accordance with an established custom and the principles of true republicanism, it becomes my duty to make known to you, the people, whom I propose to represent, my sentiments with regard to local affairs.

"Time and experience have verified to a demonstration the public utility of internal improvements. That the poorest and most thinly-populated counties would be greatly benefited by the opening of good roads, and in the clearing of navigable streams within their limits, is what no person will deny. Yet it is folly to undertake works of this or any other kind, without first knowing that we are able to finish them,—as half-finished work generally proves to be labor lost. There cannot justly be any objection to having railroads and canals, any more than to other good things, provided they cost nothing. The only objection is to paying for them; and the objection arises from the want of ability to pay.

"With respect to the County of Sangamon, some more easy means of communication than it now possesses, for the purpose of facilitating the task of exporting the surplus products of its fertile soil, and importing necessary articles from abroad, are indis-

pensably necessary. A meeting has been held of the citizens of Jacksonville and the adjacent country, for the purpose of deliberating and inquiring into the expediency of constructing a railroad from some eligible point on the Illinois River, through the town of Jacksonville, in Morgan County, to the town of Springfield, in Sangamon County. This is, indeed, a very desirable object. No other improvement that reason will justify us in hoping for can equal in utility the railroad. It is a never-failing source of communication between places of business remotely situated from each other. Upon the railroad the regular progress of commercial intercourse is not interrupted by either high or low water, or freezing weather, which are the principal difficulties that render our future hopes of water communication precarious and uncertain.

"Yet however desirable an object the construction of a railroad through our country may be; however high our imaginations may be heated at thoughts of it,—there is always a heart-appalling shock accompanying the account of its cost, which forces us to shrink from our pleasing anticipations. The principal cost of this contemplated railroad is estimated at $290,000; the bare statement of which, in my opinion, is sufficient to justify the belief that the improvement of the Sangamon River is an object much better suited to our infant resources.

"Respecting this view, I think I may say, without the fear of being contradicted, that its navigation may be rendered completely practicable as high as the mouth of the South Fork, or probably higher, to vessels of from twenty-five to thirty tons burden, for at least one-half of all common years, and to vessels of much greater burden a part of the time. From my peculiar

circumstances, it is probable that for the last twelve months I have given as particular attention to the stage of the water in this river as any other person in the country. In the month of March, 1831, in company with others, I commenced the building of a flatboat on the Sangamon, and finished and took her out in the course of the spring. Since that time I have been concerned in the mill at New Salem. These circumstances are sufficient evidence that I have not been very inattentive to the stages of the water. The time at which we crossed the mill-dam being in the last days of April, the water was lower than it had been since the breaking of winter in February, or than it was for several weeks after. The principal difficulties we encountered in descending the river were from the drifted timber, which obstructions all know are not difficult to be removed. Knowing almost precisely the height of water at this time, I believe I am safe in saying that it has as often been higher as lower since.

"From this view of the subject it appears that my calculations with regard to the navigation of the Sangamon cannot but be founded in reason; but, whatever may be its natural advantage, certain it is that it never can be practically useful to any great extent without being greatly improved by art. The drifted timber, as I have before mentioned, is the most formidable barrier to this object. Of all parts of this river, none will require so much labor in proportion to make it navigable as the last thirty or thirty-five miles; and going with the meanderings of the channel, when we are this distance above its mouth we are only between twelve and eighteen miles above Beardstown in something near a straight direction; and this route is upon

such low ground as to retain water in many places during the season, and in all parts such as to draw two-thirds or three-fourths of the river water at all high stages.

"This route is on prairie land the whole distance, so that it appears to me, by removing the turf a sufficient width, and damming up the old channel, the whole river in a short time would wash its way through, thereby curtailing the distance and increasing the velocity of the current very considerably, while there would be no timber on the banks to obstruct its navigation in future; and being nearly straight, the timber which might float in at the head would be apt to go clear through. There are also many places above this where the river, in its zigzag course forms such complete peninsulas as to be easier to cut at the necks than to remove the obstructions from the bends, which, if done, would also lessen the distance.

"What the cost of this work would be, I am unable to say. It is probable, however, that it would not be greater than is common to streams of the same length. Finally, I believe the improvement of the Sangamon River to be vastly important and highly desirable to the people of the county; and, if elected, any measure in the legislature having this for its object, which may appear judicious, will meet my approbation and receive my support.

"It appears that the practice of drawing money at exorbitant rates of interest has already been opened as a field for discussion; so I suppose I may enter upon it without claiming the honor, or risking the danger, which may await its first explorer. It seems as though we are never to have an end to this baneful and corroding system, acting almost as prejudicial

to the general interests of the community as a direct tax of several thousand dollars annually laid on each county, for the benefit of a few individuals only, unless there be a law made fixing the limits of usury. A law for this purpose, I am of opinion, may be made, without materially injuring any class of people. In cases of extreme necessity, there could always be means found to cheat the law; while in all other cases it would have its intended effect. I would favor the passage of a law on this subject which might not be very easily evaded. Let it be such that the labor and difficulty of evading it could only be justified in cases of greatest necessity.

"Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance, even on this account alone, to say nothing of the advantages and satisfaction to be derived from all being able to read the Scriptures, and other works both of a religious and moral nature, for themselves.

"For my part, I desire to see the time when education—and by its means, morality, sobriety, enterprise, and industry—shall become much more general than at present, and should be gratified to have it in my power to contribute something to the advancement of any measure which might have a tendency to accelerate that happy period.

"With regard to existing laws, some alterations are

thought to be necessary. Many respectable men have suggested that our estray laws—the law respecting the issuing of executions, the road law, and some others —are deficient in their present form, and require alterations. But, considering the great probability that the framers of those laws were wiser than myself, I should prefer not meddling with them, unless they were first attacked by others; in which case I should feel it both a privilege and a duty to take that stand, which, in my view, might tend most to the advancement of justice.

"But fellow-citizens, I shall conclude. Considering the great degree of modesty which should always attend youth, it is probable I have already been more presuming than becomes me. However, upon the subjects of which I have treated, I have spoken as I have thought. I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them; but, holding it a sound maxim that it is better only sometimes to be right than at all times to be wrong, so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them.

"Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young, and unknown to many of you. I was born, and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations or friends to recommend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the county; and, if elected, they will have conferred a favor upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate. But, if

the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

How few could excel or equal this at twenty-three years of age.

He had now been in Illinois but two years, Sangamon County and New Salem less than one year, but this circular shows a familiarity with the local issues of the day, a simplicity of statement, a clearness of demonstration, and a modest announcement of his ambition that might well add credit to any man older by a score.

I want to call attention to one thing in particular, and that is the orderly arrangement of this circular, as showing his learning, his logic, and his language.

1. His declaration of principles.
2. His demonstration of their soundness.
3. His dedication to them if elected.

I desire to emphasize this feature of this boyhood address, because like the young apple-tree bearing its first crop, it may not be perfect, indeed it seldom is, but it surely forecasts the kind of apple that tree will bear in the coming years.

This threefold manner, to wit, declaration, demonstration, and dedication, are the constitutional characteristics of the Lincoln mind and character that we see all through the coming years. This address merits further analysis. It falls into the following divisions:

1. His "duty to make known to you, the people, whom I propose to represent, my sentiments with regard to local affairs."

2. His declaration in favor of internal improvements, particularly the navigability of the Sangamon River.

3. His declaration against the loan shark of the day.

4. His declaration in favor of popular education.

5. His declaration in favor of reserving the right to change or amend the existing laws as "might tend most to the advancement of justice."

6. He notes his own humility: "I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them; but, holding it a sound maxim that it is better only sometimes to be right than at all times to be wrong, so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous I shall be ready to renounce them."

7. His peculiar ambition, and to this I urge particular attention: "I have no other (ambition) so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young and unknown to many of you. I was born, and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations or friends to recommend me."

8. "My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the county." The independent voters seem to have been of importance even in 1832.

9. His submission of the question: "If elected they (the people) will have conferred a favor upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate. But, if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

In this circular are the seeds of the student, opportunity and obligations of the orator, a subject-matter for the statesman, and the methods and manner of the popular leader and legislator.

Truly the boy Lincoln was father to the man Lincoln.

Within sixty days from the publication of this circular the Black Hawk War came on, and a company was organized among the pioneers in and about New Salem. With many others Lincoln volunteered. Soon a captain was to be chosen. There was one avowed candidate, a man by the name of Kirkpatrick. Kirkpatrick had been an employer of Lincoln at a sawmill. One of Lincoln's duties was the handling of the big logs, which called for the exercise of even his giant strength. A cant-hook was used, among other things, as is common about a sawmill, and in some way or other it got lost, strayed, or stolen. Kirkpatrick suggested buying a new one, to which Lincoln responded: "If you will give me the two dollars which the cant hook will cost you, I will handle the logs myself without the aid of a cant hook." Kirkpatrick agreed. But Lincoln never got the two dollars nor the cant-hook. Having such a high regard for a man's word of honor, Lincoln felt much hurt over Kirkpatrick's treatment, though the amount was small.

At this time it took very little persuasion from his friends in the new company to make him a candidate against Kirkpatrick. The custom was for the candidates to stand up at the head of the line, and those who favored either candidate fell in at his side. At once fully three-fourths of the men in the new company lined up on the side of Lincoln and the others, seeing his overwhelming victory, joined Lincoln and left Kirkpatrick standing alone. It was a victory that Lincoln very keenly appreciated, especially in view of Kirkpatrick's haughty and contemptuous treatment of him and his failure to pay him the two dollars, which he was abundantly able to do.

This was the people's first expression of confidence and honor toward Captain Lincoln. He served as captain about ninety days, all told, and then returned to New Salem, and, contrary to the usual political customs in such cases, Captain Lincoln never exploited his military experience or honor. Indeed, he rarely mentioned it.

One incident is peculiarly noteworthy because of its political significance. In after-years, in the year 1846, he was elected a member of Congress from the Sangamon district. While making a speech touching the claims made by the friends of General Cass as to his military record, Lincoln made this reference to the Black Hawk War:

"The friends of General Cass, when that gentleman was a candidate for the presidency, endeavored to endow him with a military reputation. Mr. Lincoln, at that time a representative in Congress, delivered a speech before the House, which, in its allusions to General Cass, was exquisitely sarcastic and irresistibly humorous. 'By the way, Mr. Speaker,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'do you know I am a military hero? Yes, sir, in the days of the Black Hawk war, I fought, bled and came away. Speaking of General Cass's career reminds me of my own. I was not at Stillman's Defeat, but I was about as near it as Cass to Hull's surrender; and like him I saw the place very soon afterward. It is quite certain I did not break my sword, for I had none to break; but I bent my musket pretty badly on one occasion. . . . If General Cass went in advance of me in picking whortleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges upon the wild onions. If he saw any live, fighting Indians, it was more than I did, but I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes; and

although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say I was often very hungry.' Mr. Lincoln then went on to say that if he should ever turn democrat, and be taken up as a candidate for the presidency by the democratic party, he hoped they would not make fun of him by attempting to make of him a military hero."

Captain Lincoln returned to New Salem about ten days before the election. Naturally the balance of the time was spent in furthering his candidacy for the State Legislature. He was defeated on the general vote, but found much satisfaction and compliment in the vote of his own precinct where he received 205 votes out of a possible 208. Nothing could more conclusively show his popularity at home.

Immediately he looked about for something to do. A man named Berry bought a half-interest in the general store kept by the Herndon Brothers. Very soon the other brother disposed of his half to Lincoln, who was without means to pay for the purchase. Herndon relates that he once asked his cousin why he sold to Lincoln on such terms, that is, without cash, merely taking Lincoln's note. To that the merchant said:

"I believed he was thoroughly honest and that impression was so strong in me that I accepted his note in payment of the whole. Lincoln had no money but I would have advanced him still more had he asked for it."

Very soon thereafter another merchant of the town by the name of Radford got into a controversy with the Clary's Grove boys, and therefore concluded to "retire from business." He sold out to William Greene, who later sold in turn to Berry and Lincoln, accepting their notes. Berry and Lincoln conducted

the business for a brief time, Lincoln giving his spare time to his studies and Berry giving his spare time to consuming the liquor that was a part of the stock.

In a comparatively short time, not to exceed eight months, Berry and Lincoln were ready "to retire." They sold out to two brothers by the name of Trent, who assumed all the store debts of their predecessors and gave their notes for the balance. Before the notes fell due the Trents failed and fled to parts unknown, and Lincoln was left with about $1,100 to pay. For a man absolutely without means, without an income, and with no more prospect than Lincoln had at that time it is no wonder that he called this his "National Debt." He discharged it in small sums year by year, paying off the last cent as late as 1848, from his salary as congressman.

His friends, however, were making Lincoln famous in that community as the most intelligent and best-read young man in it.

One John C. Calhoun, who afterward became famous, or infamous, as the president of the Lecompton Constitution of Kansas, was then surveyor of Sangamon County. Calhoun had been a school-teacher and a lawyer, was an intelligent and cultivated gentleman and a stanch Democrat, well grounded in the doctrines of his party and capable of forcibly presenting them in debate. Herndon himself says:

"I have heard Lincoln say that Calhoun gave him more trouble in his debates than Douglas ever did, because he was more captivating in his manner and a more learned man than Douglas."

Calhoun offered the position as deputy to Lincoln. Lincoln was entirely frank with him and told him that his knowledge in mathematics was so defective and

his utter ignorance of surveying was such that it would be impossible for him to accept the job.

Calhoun took such a liking to the young man's frankness and apparent intelligence that he gave him a treatise on surveying by Flint and Gibson, and advised him to study it and when he thought he could master the subject to report to him, Calhoun, for duty.

Lincoln returned to New Salem and began the new venture of qualifying himself for a deputy county surveyor.

As he had mastered his Kirkham the year before with Graham's help, he now determined to master Flint and Gibson likewise with Graham's help.

Herndon relates that "Graham's daughter is authority for the statement that her father and Lincoln frequently sat up until midnight, engrossed in calculations, and only ceased when her mother drove them out for a fresh supply of wood for the fire."

Herndon further relates in this connection:

"He was so studious and absorbed in his application at one time that his friends, according to a statement made by one of them, noticed that he was so emaciated we feared he might bring on mental derangement."

In six weeks, however, he had mastered his book and again reported to Calhoun, but before accepting the job, knowing Calhoun's intense partisan principles, he said:

"If I can be perfectly free in my political action, I will take the office, but if my sentiments or even expression of them is to be abridged in any way, I would not have it nor any other office."

He got the job.

This was the most money that Lincoln ever got for any service up to this time, three dollars per day. He became a painstaking, careful, and thorough surveyor.

One of his biographers relates that upon one occasion Lincoln was called to decide or locate a disputed corner for some persons in the northern part of the county. Among others interested was his friend and admirer Henry McHenry. According to the latter's recollection, the following happened:

"After a good deal of disputing we agreed to send for Lincoln and to abide by his decision. He came with compass, flag-staff, and chain. He stopped with me three or four days and surveyed the whole section. When in the neighborhood of the disputed corner by actual survey he called for his staff, and driving it in the ground at a certain spot said 'Gentlemen, here is the corner.' We dug down into the ground at the point indicated and, lo! there we found about six or eight inches of the original stake sharpened at the end and beneath which was the usual piece of charcoal placed there by Rector the surveyor who laid the ground off for the government many years before."

That part of Illinois was developing very rapidly, and Lincoln frequently laid out the original town plats. Among these was the town of Petersburg, the original survey of which bears Mr. Lincoln's name. It is claimed with some show of probability that his first chain was not a chain, but rather only a grapevine.

Several of his biographers relate the fact that once his surveyor's instruments were sold to pay one of the old Berry debts. A friend came to his rescue, bid in the instruments and returned them to Mr. Lincoln.

I want to challenge attention to one thing especially in connection with his duties as a surveyor: We hear much nowadays about surveys, inventories, taking stock of everything you have and that the other fellow has. Lincoln applied much of the same method and philosophy to the survey of every subject that was submitted to him for study, consideration, and judgment, not only in cases in court, but causes in government.

In his experience as a surveyor he came in contact very frequently with the word "dedicate": the dedication of streets, of public grounds, and the laying out of his town plats—that is, the giving over, yielding, consecrating something to a public use, or a public service—and we shall see and learn much of this word *dedicate* in future chapters.

CHAPTER VI

LINCOLN ENTERS POLITICS

(CONTINUED)

SHORTLY after Lincoln and Berry had sold out their store to the Trent Brothers, and the whole thing had "petered out," as Lincoln said, Lincoln was commissioned postmaster at New Salem by President Jackson, though he was known at the time to be a stanch Whig.

The duties were not very burdensome, the mail arriving only once a week. The post-office was really under Lincoln's hat, where he carried the mail in his trips around the neighborhood. The office was nominally in the Hill store of New Salem. The small salary, however, was the most insignificant part of it.

The really important thing was the efficiency of the postmaster, who gave universal satisfaction in his management of the office and had the opportunity of reading all the newspapers that came to the office, which furnished him his information as to current events. Nobody will ever be able fairly to estimate the large fund of information of a public nature that Abraham Lincoln gathered from the great newspapers of that day by his inveterate reading and study.

In 1834 he again became a candidate for the legislature upon substantially the same declaration of principles on which he made his canvass in 1832. He was elected by an unusually large vote. His friend

John T. Stuart, afterward his partner, was also a candidate on that same ticket. Lincoln, however, led Stuart by more than 200, a very flattering vote indeed.

Some say he walked to the capital to be inducted into office, some say he rode on horseback, some by stage. It is immaterial which way he went. Everybody knows that he was so poor that he had to borrow money to buy suitable clothing and to take care of his preliminary expenses while at the State capital, which was then Vandalia. The preponderance of the evidence, however, suggests that he went to the capital by stage-coach, as the public generally did in that day.

During his first term he conducted himself with becoming modesty and took little part in the public discussions, but he had a keen eye and discriminating judgment to learn the "ropes" of procedure and parliamentary law, of committee work, and the general legislative machinery of the State.

As one man, Mentor Graham, was big in his influence on Lincoln at New Salem, so here at Vandalia, and alike at the new capital of Springfield, there were many big young men, full of the fibre and fire of the frontier, that made a wonderful impression upon Lincoln, knocked off many of his sharp edges and rough corners, and qualified him for useful and distinguished service as a member of the legislature, and later as a member of the bar.

The legislative sessions then, as they should be now, were short, and his brief service during his first term seems to have whetted his appetite for further political honors. He became a candidate again in 1836, as fully appears from the following circular in the Sangamon *Journal:*

"New Salem, June 13, 1836.

"*To the Editor of the Journal:*

"In your paper of last Saturday I see a communication over the signature of 'Many Voters' in which the candidates who are announced in the *Journal* are called upon to 'show their hands.' Agreed. Here's mine:

"I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

"If elected I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me.

"While acting as their Representative, I shall be governed by their will on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and upon all others I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of public lands to the several States to enable our State, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it.

"If alive on the first Monday in November, I shall vote for Hugh L. White, for President.

"Very respectfully,

"A. Lincoln."

For a simple, short-cut, straightforward declaration of principles, it is hard to beat. Much of it is *apropos* to-day and might well be imitated by modern would-be statesmen.

During this time Lincoln was gradually shaping his political ambition to some definite political programme. Naturally the psychology of the political situation of Illinois at that time appealed to him most strongly, and the one great ambition of his life of that day was to become the "DeWitt Clinton of Illinois"—DeWitt Clinton, it will be remembered, was the great governor of New York, who became famous for the canals and other internal improvements of that State.

As Lincoln had done in Indiana, as he had done at New Salem, so he did at Vandalia and Springfield: organized literary societies.

The Springfield Society was called by the somewhat dignified name of "Lyceum."

In the campaign of 1836 for the State Legislature a joint debate was held just before the election. Substantially all of the candidates participated. The argument became very heated and very bitter. A duel seemed about to result, when Lincoln, with his spirit of fairness and justice to all the disputants, quieted the tumult. The meeting adjourned with comparatively good feeling among all the candidates.

It was during this campaign that Joshua F. Speed, a great friend of Lincoln's, describes a meeting held at Springfield about this same time:

"The crowd was large and great numbers of his friends and admirers had come in from the country. I remember that his speech was a very able one, using with great power and originality all the arguments used to sustain the principles of the Whig party as against its great rival, the Democratic party of that day. The speech produced a profound impression—the crowd was with him. George Forquer, an old citizen, a man of recognized prominence and ability as a

lawyer, was present. Forquer had been a Whig—one of the champions of the party—but had then recently joined the Democratic party, and almost simultaneous with the change had been appointed Register of the Land Office, which office he then held. Just about that time Mr. Forquer had completed a neat frame house—the best house then in Springfield—and over it had erected a lightning rod, the only one in the place and the first one Mr. Lincoln had ever seen. He afterwards told me that seeing Forquer's lightning rod had led him to the study of the properties of electricity and the utility of the rod as a conductor. At the conclusion of Lincoln's speech the crowd was about dispersing, when Forquer rose and asked to be heard. He commenced by saying that the young man would have to be taken down, and was sorry the task devolved on him. He then proceeded to answer Lincoln's speech in a style which, while it was able and fair, in his whole manner asserted and claimed superiority. Lincoln stood a few steps away with arms folded, carefully watching the speaker and taking in everything he said. He was laboring under a good deal of suppressed excitement. Forquer's sting had roused the lion within him. At length Forquer concluded, and he mounted the stand to reply.

"I have heard him often since," continued Speed, "in the courts and before the people, but never saw him appear and acquit himself so well as upon that occasion. His reply to Forquer was characterized by great dignity and force. I shall never forget the conclusion of that speech: 'Mr. Forquer commenced his speech by announcing,' said Lincoln, 'that the young man would have to be taken down. It is for you, fellow citizens, not for me to say whether I am up or

down. The gentleman has seen fit to allude to my being a young man; but he forgets that I am older in years than I am in the tricks and trades of politicians. I desire to live, and I desire place and distinction; but I would rather die now than, like the gentleman, live to see the day that I would change my politics for an office worth three thousand dollars a year, and then feel compelled to erect a lightning rod to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God.'

"The effect of this reply can readily be imagined."

Another incident that throws some light upon the spirit of the time as well as the versatility of Lincoln occurred in his campaign for the State Legislature in 1838.

Herndon* gives the account of it as follows:

"Among the Democratic orators who stumped the county at this time was one Taylor—commonly known at Colonel Dick Taylor. He was a showy, bombastic man, with a weakness for fine clothes and other personal adornments. Frequently he was pitted against Lincoln, and indulged in many bitter flings at the lordly ways and aristocratic pretensions of the Whigs. He had a way of appealing to 'his horny-handed neighbors,' and resorted to many other artful tricks of a demagogue. When he was one day expatiating in his accustomed style, Lincoln, in a spirit of mischief and, as he expressed it, 'to take the wind out of his sails,' slipped up to the speaker's side, and catching his vest by the lower edge gave it a sharp pull. The latter instantly opened and revealed to his astonished hearers a ruffled shirt-front glittering with watch-chain, seals, and other golden jewels. The effect was startling. The speaker stood confused and dumbfounded, while

* Vol. I, page 185.

the audience roared with laughter. When it came Lincoln's turn to answer he covered the gallant colonel over in this style: 'While Colonel Taylor was making these charges against the Whigs over the country, riding in fine carriages, wearing ruffled shirts, kid gloves, massive gold watch-chains with large gold seals, and flourishing a heavy gold-headed cane, I was a poor boy, hired on a flat-boat at eight dollars a month, and had only one pair of breeches to my back, and they were buckskin. Now, if you know the nature of buckskin when wet and dried by the sun, it will shrink; and my breeches kept shrinking until they left several inches of my legs bare between the tops of my socks and the lower part of my breeches; and whilst I was growing taller they were becoming shorter, and so much tighter that they left a blue streak around my legs that can be seen to this day. If you call this aristocracy I plead guilty to the charge.'"

Another event in the following campaign of 1840 is worthy of mention as showing some new sides to Lincoln.

One of his biographers gives this account of what became known in Springfield as the "skinning" of Thomas:

"Jesse B. Thomas, one of the men who had represented the Democratic side in the great debate in the Presbyterian Church (earlier in the campaign) in a speech at the court house, indulged in some fun at the expense of the 'Long Nine,' reflecting somewhat more on Lincoln than the rest. The latter was not present, but being apprised by his friends of what had been said, hastened to the meeting, and soon after Thomas closed, stepped upon the platform and responded. The substance of his speech on this occasion

was not so memorable as the manner of its delivery. He felt the sting of Thomas's allusions, and for the first time, on the stump or in public, resorted to mimicry for effect. In this, as will be seen later on, he was without a rival. He imitated Thomas in gesture and voice, at times caricaturing his walk and the very motion of his body. Thomas, like everybody else, had some peculiarities of expression and gesture, and these Lincoln succeeded in rendering more prominent than ever. The crowd yelled and cheered as he continued. Encouraged by these demonstrations, the ludicrous features of the speaker's performance gave way to intense and scathing ridicule. Thomas, who was obliged to sit near by and endure the pain of this unique ordeal, was ordinarily sensitive; but the exhibition goaded him to desperation. He was so thoroughly wrought up with suppressed emotion that he actually gave way to tears."

It is related that shortly thereafter, Lincoln, feeling that possibly he had gone too far, saw Thomas and made ample apology for his strictures. Acknowledgment of wrong with appropriate apology is the act of a just man.

As we have before seen, Lincoln met big books and studied them; he also met big men and studied them, clear through from cover to cover, books and men. He knew their strength and their weakness, emulated the one and avoided the other.

Among these men who were members either of the legislature or members of the bar at Springfield, or the famous eighth judicial district were the following: Douglas, Baker, Davis, Hardin, McClernand, Browning, Treat, Edwards, Trumbull, McDougal, and many others. Indeed, in the first legislature of which Lin-

coln was a member there were numbered not only a future President of the United States and a future candidate for the presidency, but six future members of the United States Senate, eight future members of the House of Representatives, future Cabinet members, future judges of the State, and many other men who later distinguished themselves as citizens or as officers.

Surely, there were giants in those days.

Lincoln, during his first and second terms in the legislature had so capably conducted the affairs of the State on matters of legislation, and so successfully led his party, that upon his election for the third term in 1838, he was the party's unanimous choice for speaker; the Democrats being in the majority, however, he simply became the minority leader. He easily maintained his prestige in the legislature and upon re-election for the last time in 1840 he was again his party's choice for speaker.

He was urged again to become a candidate but declined, evidently looking to higher honors, for in 1842 he became a candidate for Congress against John J. Hardin and Edward Baker, both capable men. Hardin was nominated and elected and served one term, which seems to have been the rule of service in that district at that time.

Following him in 1844, Baker was nominated, though Lincoln was again a candidate. Each time Lincoln pressed his candidacy to the point where he felt it was unavailing to insist further, and then supported the candidacy of both Hardin and Baker respectively.

In 1846 Lincoln was nominated and elected. The canvass was a very interesting and a very bitter one personally. His opposing candidate was the famous Reverend Peter Cartwright, a circuit-rider in the dis-

trict for years, who probably knew more men personally in the district than even did Lincoln.

Lincoln's religious views, or the want of them at that time, got into the controversy, but the people's faith in Lincoln could not be discredited, and he emerged from the canvass stronger than ever.

The biography Lincoln furnished for the congressional directory, after his election, is of especial interest as another proof of his brevity and directness, as well as his humility:

"Born February 12, 1809, Hardin County, Kentucky.

"Education, defective.

"Profession, lawyer.

"Military service, captain of volunteers in the Black Hawk War.

"Offices held: postmaster at a very small office; four times a member of the Illinois Legislature, and elected to the Lower House of the next Congress."

He took his seat in the National Congress the first Monday of December, 1847. His legislative experience at Springfield, Illinois, during four terms of the legislature, as well as his legal experience at the bar, also his experience upon the stump in the discussion of the great public questions of the day, had so equipped him for his service in the Federal Congress that it was not long before he was heard from in a most surprising and striking way.

For many years the old rule applied that first-term congressmen in either house must be silent and duly deferential to the powers that be. Lincoln was neither, but preferred to smash the precedent in both respects.

At the same time that Lincoln became a member of the lower house Douglas became one of the youngest

members of the upper house. Before thirty days of the congressional session had elapsed, to wit, the 22d day of December, Lincoln introduced a series of resolutions that have become known as the "Spot Resolutions." These resolutions are worthy of particular mention.

"WHEREAS, The President of the United States, in his message of May 11, 1846, has declared that 'the Mexican Government not only refused to receive him (the envoy of the United States) or listen to his propositions, but, after a long-continued series of menaces, has at last invaded *our territory*, and shed the blood of our fellow citizens on our own soil':

"And again, in his message of December 8, 1846, that 'We had ample cause of war against Mexico long before the breaking out of hostilities; but even then we forebore to take redress into our own hands until Mexico herself became the aggressor, by invading *our soil* in hostile array, and shedding the blood of our citizens':

"And yet again, in his message of December 7, 1847, that 'The Mexican Government refused even to hear the terms of adjustment which he (our minister of peace) was authorized to propose, and finally, under wholly unjustifiable pretexts, involved the two countries in war, by invading the territory of the State of Texas, striking the first blow, and shedding the blood of our citizens on *our own soil*,' and,

"WHEREAS, This House is desirous to obtain a full knowledge of all the facts which go to establish whether the particular spot on which the blood of our citizens was so shed was or was not at that time '*our own soil*': therefore,

"*Resolved by the House of Representatives*, That the

President of the United States be respectfully requested to inform this house:

"1st. Whether the spot on which the blood of our citizens was shed, as in his messages declared, was or was not within the territory of Spain, at least after the treaty of 1819, until the Mexican revolution.

"2d. Whether that spot is or is not within the territory which was wrested from Spain by the revolutionary Government of Mexico.

"3d. Whether that spot is or is not within a settlement of people, which settlement has existed ever since long before the Texas revolution, and until its inhabitants fled before the approach of the United States army.

"4th. Whether that settlement is or is not isolated from any and all other settlements by the Gulf and the Rio Grande on the south and west, and by wide uninhabited regions on the north and east.

"5th. Whether the people of that settlement, or a majority of them, or any of them, have ever submitted themselves to the government or laws of Texas or of the United States, by consent or by compulsion, either by accepting office, or voting at elections, or paying tax, or serving on juries, or having process served upon them, or in any other way.

"6th. Whether the people of that settlement did or did not flee from the approach of the United States army, leaving unprotected their homes and their growing crops, *before* the blood was shed, as in the messages stated; and whether the first blood, so shed, was or was not shed within the inclosure of one of the people who had thus fled from it.

"7th. Whether our citizens, whose blood was shed, as in his messages declared, were or were not, at that

time, armed officers and soldiers, sent into that settlement by the military order of the President, through the Secretary of War.

"8th. Whether the military force of the United States was or was not so sent into that settlement after General Taylor had more than once intimated to the War Department that, in his opinion, no such movement was necessary to the defense or protection of Texas."

These resolutions clearly show Lincoln's full familiarity with the subject which he was dealing with. They show him going to the very crux of the controversy.

Lincoln evidently was a party man in its best sense. In his eulogy upon Henry Clay in 1852 he said:

"A free people in times of peace and quiet when pressed by no common danger, naturally divide into parties. At such times the man who is not of either party is not, cannot be, of any consequence. Mr. Clay, therefore, was of a party."

The northern division of the Whig party devoutly believed that the Mexican War was nothing less than an effort to increase slave territory and slave power. But the country was at war and the very serious and delicate dilemma arose of denouncing the cause and occasion of the war and at the same time supporting the government in voting the necessary funds and supplies.

There were many charges of disloyalty and treason to the government made against leading Whigs, Lincoln among the number, especially after his speech on the 12th of January, 1848.

This speech is a marvel for the thoroughness of knowledge and entire familiarity with all the facts surrounding the beginning of the war. It showed in a

striking manner how thoroughly Lincoln went to the bottom of things before he presented his views to the public.

His clear, concise reasoning, his plain, pointed speech, his demonstration of his position on the unjustifiableness of the war were unanswerable. For logic and language this address deserves to rank with any other great argumentative Lincoln ever made; and still there were many who did not recognize in this speech the coming man.

Notwithstanding the Whig opposition to the war, the political paradox presents itself in 1848 of the same Whig party nominating, supporting, and electing the real hero of the Mexican War, General Taylor, and electing him on account of his military record and prestige,—for he had no political record, which seems to have been one of his chief qualifications. Clay, the candidate of many campaigns, had, as many other men have had, too much record.

Lincoln made a speech in which he rigorously ridiculed General Cass, the opposing candidate to General Taylor. He said, after quoting from the record to show where General Cass had stood on slavery, particularly the Wilmot Proviso:

"These extracts show that in 1846 General Cass was for the Proviso at once, that in March, 1847, he was still for it, but not just then; and that in December he was against it altogether. This is a true index to the whole man. When the question was raised in 1846, he was in a blustering hurry to take ground for it, . . . but soon he began to see glimpses of the great democratic ox-gad waving in his face, and to hear indistinctly, a voice saying, 'back! back, sir! back a little!' He shakes his head, and bats his eyes, and

blunders back to his position of March, 1847; but still the gad waves, and the voice grows more distinct and sharper still—'back, sir! back, I say! further back!' and back he goes to the position of December, 1847; at which the gad is still, and the voice soothingly says —'so! stand still at that!'"

While not in diplomatic phrase, it certainly had dynamic force.

Lincoln was not a candidate for re-election. In discussing the matter in a letter to Herndon in January, 1848, he says:

"January 8, 1848.

"DEAR WILLIAM: . . .

"As to speech-making, by way of getting the hang of the House I made a little speech two or three days ago on a post-office question of no general interest. I find speaking here and elsewhere about the same thing. I am about as badly scared, and no worse, as I am when I speak in court. I expect to make one within a week or two, in which I hope to succeed well enough to wish you to see it.

"It is very pleasant to learn from you that there are some who desire that I should be reelected. I most heartily thank them for their kind partiality; and I can say, as Mr. Clay said of the annexation of Texas, that 'personally I would not object' to a reelection, although I thought at the time, and still think, it would be quite as well for me to return to the law at the end of a single term. I made the declaration that I would not be a candidate again, more from a wish to deal fairly with others, to keep peace among our friends, and to keep the district from going to the enemy, than for any cause personal to myself; so that, if it should

so happen that nobody else wishes to be elected, I could not refuse the people the right of sending me again. But to enter myself as a competitor of others, or to authorize any one so to enter me, *is what my word and honor forbid.*"

Lincoln, after declining to be a candidate for re-election, entered heartily into the campaign for the election of General Taylor. In that behalf he made a campaign trip through New England which is of special interest here.

As to this, the Boston *Advertiser* reports:

"Mr. Lincoln has a very tall and thin figure, with an intellectual face, showing a searching mind and a cool judgment. He spoke in a clear and cool and very eloquent manner, carrying the audience with him in his able arguments and brilliant illustrations, only interrupted by warm and frequent applause. He began by expressing a real feeling of modesty in addressing an audience 'this side of the mountains, a part of the country where, in the opinion of the people of his section, everybody was supposed to be instructed and wise. But he had devoted his attention to the question of the coming presidential election, and was not unwilling to exchange with all whom he might meet the ideas to which he had arrived.' This passage gives some reason to suppose that, conscious of his powers, he was disposed to try them before audiences somewhat different from those to which he had been accustomed, and therefore, he had come to New England."

Lincoln also made a speech at Boston which, according to the newspaper report, was "seldom equalled for sound reason, cogent argument and keen satire."

Three cheers were given for the "Lone Star" of Illinois, Lincoln being the only Whig member from that State.

All the reports of this campaign from the press and interviews by leading politicians of the day show that Lincoln had made a wonderful impression upon all his audiences, and that he appreciably advanced the cause of General Taylor as a presidential candidate.

Herndon records the fact that while making a speech at Dedham in that campaign, where he had spoken only a half-hour, the following occurred:

"The bell that called to the steam cars sounded. Mr. Lincoln instantly stopped. 'I am engaged to speak at Cambridge to-night,' said he, 'and I must leave.' The whole audience seemed to rise in protest. 'Oh, no! go on! finish it!' was heard on every hand. One gentleman arose and pledged himself to take his horse and carry him across the country. But Mr. Lincoln was inexorable. 'I can't take any risks,' said he. 'I have engaged to go to Cambridge, and I must be there. I came here as I agreed, and I am going there in the same way.' A more disappointed audience was never seen; but Mr. Lincoln had fairly wakened it up, and it stayed through the afternoon and into the evening to listen to other speakers. We tried to get him to come again, but was impossible."

After this campaign Lincoln returned to Springfield, Illinois. Following the election, he returned again to Washington, where he remained until March 4, 1849, which closed his congressional career.

An interesting fact here appears. His prominence in the campaign of 1848, especially his defense of General Taylor personally as a fit man for President, led some of his friends to make some effort with the ad-

ministration to procure for him a desirable presidential appointment.

It is said with a show of probability that the President tendered him the governorship of the territory of Oregon, as well as the choice of some other Western appointments. Acceptance would have required, however, his removal from Springfield. It is said that the decisive vote was finally cast by Mrs. Lincoln, and the country will never know how much it may be indebted to Mrs. Lincoln for this veto.

CHAPTER VII

LINCOLN THE LAWYER

Aside from a few military heroes, and one or two other notable exceptions, the lawyer has been the occupant of the White House from the birth of the nation until the present hour.

He has constituted the potential and generally the numerical majority in both houses of Congress; of necessity he has occupied the federal bench to the exclusion of all other professions. And what has been true in the nation has been true in a more or less degree in most of the several States, so that, for good or ill, we have had very largely a government by lawyers.

For twenty-four years before becoming President Abraham Lincoln was engaged in the practice of law in both State and Federal courts at Springfield, Illinois. His preparation for his chosen profession should be of intense interest, not only to the layman but to his fellow lawyers as well.

His biographers generally agree that the first law-book ever coming into his hands was the "Revised Statutes of Indiana," which he borrowed while living in Indiana from the township constable, one David Turnham.

This volume contained not only the statutes of Indiana but also the Constitution of Indiana, the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Ordinance of 1787.

That he read and reread, studied, and literally devoured this book there can be no doubt.

The book itself, now treasured by Mrs. Emma Winters, of Brooklyn, the wife of a former librarian of the New York Law Institute, attests hard service.

Turnham himself is authority for the statement that this book had much to do with influencing the boy to study law as his chosen profession. We are not advised as to when this was, but it must have been some time prior to his majority.

Some biographers have made light of the influence of this volume on the mind of young Lincoln. But inasmuch as it was his perverse habit to devour practically every book that he could get his hands on, it is not improbable that this volume suffered the same fate.

One thing is quite sure, that the Declaration of Independence therein found became finally the warp and woof of all his political ideas and inspirations. This fact is more than confirmed in his many addresses, especially in his speech at Philadelphia, which will be referred to in the chapter of Lincoln's Interpretation of the Declaration of Independence.

The very scarcity of his books enhanced their value to him, and it is not difficult to presume that this book, at least upon constitutional law, State and federal, the Declaration of Independence, and the Ordinance of 1787 furnished much food for his hungry and precocious mind.

The next book he read was Blackstone, and this while clerking in the store for Offut, at New Salem, and also when a merchant on his own account in partnership with Berry.

Tradition at least records that some traveller came that way who had a surplus barrel of junk which he no longer cared to carry. He sold it to Lincoln for

fifty cents, barrel and contents. At the bottom of this barrel were two volumes of Blackstone.

At all events, he read Blackstone while at New Salem. He not only read it, he studied it, he mastered it, he knew it from cover to cover. Much of his clear, concise legal style is readily attributable to his familiarity with Blackstone's legal English.

In his campaign for the legislature he met Major John T. Stuart, of Springfield, one of the leading lawyers of Illinois. Stuart encouraged him in the study of law and loaned him a number of law-books, which Lincoln took with him from Springfield back to New Salem.

Lincoln himself has spoken upon this subject in the following words:

"I began to read those famous works (Blackstone's 'Commentaries') and I had plenty of time, for during the long summer days when the farmers were busy with their crops, my customers were few and far between. And the more I read the more intensely interested I became. Never in my whole life was my mind so thoroughly absorbed. I read until I devoured them."

Some years afterward Lincoln was asked by a young man as to how to study law, to which inquiry he responded:

"Get books and read and study them carefully. Begin with Blackstone's Commentaries, and after reading carefully through, say twice, take Chitty's Pleadings, Greenleaf's Evidence, and Story's Equity in succession. Work, work, work is the main thing."

One can but regret that so many of our so-called modern schools of law have omitted from their course of educational training such standard works as Lin-

coln mentions, works that deal scientifically with the fundamental and philosophical principles of the law.

These masterpieces of legal logic and language have been supplanted by a number of so-called "case books," a mere collection in more or less abbreviated form of the judgments pronounced by some judge or court.

Now every judge of experience well knows that the primary idea in the opinion of the judge speaking for the court is to support and sustain the judgment entered in the particular case, with a view of discussing only the questions raised in that particular case. Beyond that it is a mere *obiter dictum.*

The judge rendering the opinion is primarily not concerned with an orderly scientific discussion of the fundamental principle involved, its origin, history, and development. He applies it only to the particular case in defense of the particular judgment.

"Case law" is fast becoming the great bane of the bench and bar.

Our old-time great thinkers and profound reasoners who conspicuously honored and distinguished our jurisprudence have been succeeded very largely by an industrious, painstaking, far-searching army of sleuths, of the type of Sherlock Holmes, hunting some precedent in some case, confidently assured that if the search be long enough and far enough some apparently parallel case may be found to justify even the most absurd and ridiculous contention.

Case after case is piled, Ossa on Pelion, and about an equal number can be found on each side; then the court is expected to strike the balance and decide according to the preponderance of cases, rather than the preponderance of reason and justice.

After all, the case is at most an illustration of some

great underlying fundamental principle, and is helpful only to the degree that it tends to demonstrate or illustrate the soundness and application of the principle. The lawyer and law student are intensely interested in the principle. Scientific treatises upon these fundamental principles of law and equity have a proper place in any library, but imagine a library made up of case books,—illustrations, at best. Cartoons are often very pertinent and are helpful, but they do not yet make a satisfactory library.

Think of such a library as compared with the old masters like Blackstone, Chitty, Greenleaf, Story, and Kent, Cooley, Bishop, Thompson, and the like, or even as compared with the library Lincoln had when at Springfield.

Hill, in his splendid book "Lincoln the Lawyer," says:*

"A part of Mr. Lincoln's law library of 1861 is still in existence. In the Lambert collection: Illinois Conveyancer; Angell on Limitations. In the Vanuxem-Potter collection: A volume containing the Declaration of Independence, etc.; Chitty's Pleadings and Parties; Stephen's Commentaries on the Laws of England; Greenleaf on Evidence, vol. I; Revised Statutes of Illinois, 1844; Kent's Commentaries; Smith's Landlord and Tenant; Story's Equity Jurisprudence, 1843; Parsons' Law of Contracts, 2 vols.; Wharton's Criminal Law; Redfield's Law of Railways; Stephen's Pleading. In the Orendorf collection: Barbour & Herrington, Eq. Dig., Vol. 3; Biddle & McMurtrie, Index to Eng. Com. Law, 2 vols.; Taylor on Poisons in Relation to Medical Jurisprudence; Barbour's Eq. Dig. of U. S. etc.; 3 Curtis' U. S. Dig., 1846; Chitty &

* Footnote, page 292.

Temple, Law of Carriers; Angell & Ames on Corporations; 1 U. S. Digest for 1847."

We do know that the authors of the works studied and recommended by Lincoln, have, during a long period of years, been universally recognized as the leading masters of law and logic. To omit them from the law student's curriculum would seem like omitting the Bible from a school of theology or Gray's "Anatomy" from a school of medicine.

After all, the primary and original principles of law and equity, as announced by these legal masters, have never been surpassed in our legal lore, and they are to-day quoted as standards in practically all the courts of our land.

Lincoln's advice to the young lawyer is strikingly significant in another respect, to wit, the logical order in which he names the books for the young law student to read:

1. The body of the law as scientifically arranged and stated by Blackstone, the greatest law-book of its day, perhaps of any other day.

2. The manner of framing a legal issue, as described and discussed in Chitty's "Pleadings."

3. The manner of proving that issue—the evidence, and testimony, what is competent and what is not competent, and the measure of proof required, etc., as viewed by Greenleaf.

4. The conscience of the chancellor is appealed to as a court of equity to provide a remedy for some wrong wherein the law is short or deficient, and Story, the great jurist, is admittedly a master in this branch of our jurisprudence.

Lincoln has heretofore expressed his own view of the study of the law by the word "devoured." Hern-

don relates* an interesting and characteristic incident in Lincoln's early studies, where he draws a most significant distinction between reading and studying. Let the student emulate it. It occurred while Lincoln was living at New Salem:

A man by the name of Russell Godby employed Lincoln to do farm work. One day he was much surprised to find him sitting barefoot on the summit of a woodpile and attentively reading a book.

"This being an unusual thing for farm hands in that early day to do, I asked him," relates Godby, "what he was reading. 'I'm not reading,' he answered. 'I am studying.' 'Studying what?' I enquired. 'Law, sir,' was the emphatic response. It was really too much for me, as I looked at him sitting there proud as Cicero. 'Great God Almighty!' I exclaimed and passed on."

As Lincoln said before:

"The more I read (Blackstone) the more intensely interested I became. Never in my whole life was my mind so thoroughly absorbed. I read until I devoured them."

At last the youth had found the yearning of his life. He was not only "thoroughly absorbed," but entirely oblivious to everything else. His conduct caused much comment in the neighborhood:

"He dwelt altogether in the land of thought. His deep meditation and abstraction easily induced the belief among his horny handed companions that he was lazy. . . . His chief delight during the day if unmolested was to lie down under the shade of some inviting tree and read and study. . . . No one had a more retentive memory. If he read or heard a good

* Vol. I, page 102.

thing it never escaped him. His power of concentration was intense, and in the ability through analysis to strip bare a proposition he was unexcelled. His thoughtful and investigating mind dug down after ideas and never stopped until bottom facts were reached."

Constable Turnham says as to his later years in Indiana:

"As he shot up he seemed to change in appearance and action. Although quick-witted and ready with an answer, he began to exhibit deep thoughtfulness and was so often lost in studied reflection we could not help noticing the strange turn in his actions."

Herndon says:*

"But Lincoln kept on at his studies. Wherever he was and whenever he could do so the book was brought into use. He carried it with him in his rambles through the woods and his walks to the river. When night came he read it by the aid of any friendly light he could find. Frequently he went down to the cooper's shop and kindled a fire out of the waste material lying about, and by the light it afforded read until far into the night."

Herndon quotes one of his companions as saying:

"He never appeared to be a hard student, as he seemed to master his studies with little effort, until he commenced the study of the law. In that he became wholly engrossed, and began for the first time to avoid the society of men, in order that he might have more time for study."†

Henry McHenry, who knew him well, said:

"He was so studious and absorbed in his application at one time that his friends noticed that he was so emaciated we feared it might bring on mental derangement."

* Vol. I, page 102.

† Herndon, vol. I, p. 112.

Holland says:

"One who remembers his habits during this period says that he went, day after day, for weeks, and sat under an oak tree on a hill near New Salem and read, moving around to keep in the shade, as the sun moved. He was so much absorbed that some people thought and said that he was crazy. Not unfrequently he met and passed his best friends without noticing them. The truth was that he had found the pursuit of his life, and had become very much in earnest."

His presence in Springfield during his first term in the legislature afforded him a splendid opportunity of further pursuing his studies and meeting also some of the really big lawyers of Illinois. They seemed to give him hope and spur and help materially to "stir the gifts that were within him."

Upon his admission to the bar in March, 1837, he was paid the very high compliment of being invited to become the junior partner of Major John T. Stuart, a fellow member of the Illinois Legislature. Stuart knew better than any one else the thoroughness of Lincoln's equipment for a great legal career.

Lincoln's friend, Joshua F. Speed, relates in a very interesting way Lincoln's arrival in Springfield to practise law as follows:

"He had ridden into town on a borrowed horse," relates Speed, "and engaged from the only cabinet-maker in the village a single bedstead. He came into my store, set his saddle-bags on the counter, and enquired what the furniture for a single bedstead would cost. I took slate and pencil, made a calculation, and found the sum for furniture complete would amount to seventeen dollars in all. Said he: 'It is probably cheap enough; but I want to say that, cheap as it is,

I have not the money to pay. But if you will credit me until Christmas, and my experiment here as a lawyer is a success, I will pay you then. If I fail in that I will probably never pay you at all.' The tone of his voice was so melancholy that I felt for him. I looked up at him and I thought then, as I think now, that I never saw so gloomy and melancholy a face in my life. I said to him, 'So small a debt seems to affect you so deeply, I think I can suggest a plan by which you will be able to attain your end without incurring any debt. I have a very large room and a very large double bed in it, which you are perfectly welcome to share with me if you choose.' 'Where is your room?' he asked. 'Upstairs,' said I, pointing to the stairs leading from the store to my room. Without saying a word he took his saddle-bags on his arm, went upstairs, set them down on the floor, came down again, and with a face beaming with pleasure and smiles, exclaimed: 'Well, Speed, I'm moved.'"

He was now to have the opportunity for which he had long looked and labored, and his friends looked forward with interest and anxiety to the tests and trials through which he must pass in the clash and conflict of legislative hall and judicial forum.

There is no other place known among men where the measure and merit of mind is so accurately ascertained as at the trial table before judge or jury, where one or more men of presumably equal ability are engaged upon either side for the express purpose of luring into pitfalls, exposing the weakness and fallacy of argument, overthrowing a false premise of fact or law, and by direct and flank attack discounting and defeating a ruling and judgment.

What was to be the verdict of the profession and of the public upon this new limb of the law?

We have already noted his intellectual preparation, which, however, did not cease with his admission to the bar, but continued throughout his practice as a lawyer and his administration as President.

But what were to be his ethical and moral standards in the practice of the law?

Was Lincoln still to possess and practise his "passion for justice," as noted in an earlier chapter? Was he still to be the "Honest Abe" as he was known at New Salem?

First, let him speak for himself as to his ideals in the practice of the law.

Upon his death there was found among his effects some loose, undated sheets in his own handwriting, that he had evidently prepared to use as the basis of an address or lecture to lawyers or law students. They should be printed in burning letters and hung in every law college and law office:

"Extemporaneous speaking should be practised and cultivated. It is the lawyer's avenue to the public. However able and faithful he may be in other respects, people are slow to bring him business if he cannot make a speech. And yet there is not a more fatal error to young lawyers than relying too much on speech-making. If any one, upon his rare powers of speaking, shall claim an exemption from the drudgery of the law, his case is a failure in advance. Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser—in fees, expenses, and waste of time. As a peacemaker, the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man. There will

still be business enough. Never stir up litigation. A worse man can scarcely be found than one who does this. Who can be more nearly a fiend than he who habitually overhauls the register of deeds in search of defects in titles, whereon to stir up strife and put money in his pocket? A moral tone ought to be infused into the profession which should drive such men out of it. . . . There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest. I say vague because, when we consider to what extent confidence and honors are reposed in and conferred upon lawyers by the people, it appears improbable that their impression of dishonesty is very distinct and vivid. Yet the impression is common—almost universal. Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief. Resolve to be honest at all events; and if, in your own judgment, you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer. Choose some other occupation rather than one in the choosing of which you do, in advance, consent to be a knave."

Conceive, if you can, this code of ethics carried out in every court-room, not merely to the letter, but to the spirit, by every counsellor at law. What a change would be wrought in the administration of justice in the forty-eight commonwealths of our country!

It is regrettable to-day that so many men have one code for their personal life, another code for their professional life, and perchance yet another for their business life.

Lincoln had but one code, the code of justice, the code of the Golden Rule, the code of conscience.

Herndon speaks of Lincoln's early practice as Stuart's partner as follows:

"Stephen T. Logan was judge of the Circuit court, and Stephen A. Douglas was prosecuting attorney. Among the attorneys we find many promising spirits. Edward D. Baker, John T. Stuart, Cyrus Walker, Samuel H. Treat, Jesse B. Thomas, George Forquer, Dan Stone, Ninian W. Edwards, John J. Hardin, Schuyler Strong, A. T. Bledsoe, and Josiah Lamborn—a galaxy of names, each destined to shed more or less lustre on the history of the State. While I am inclined to believe that Lincoln did not, after entering Stuart's office, do as much deep and assiduous studying as people generally credit him with, yet I am confident he absorbed not a little learning by contact with the great minds who thronged about the courts and State Capitol. The books of Stuart and Lincoln, during 1837, show a practice more extensive than lucrative, for while they received a number of fees, only two or three of them reached fifty dollars; and one of these has a credit of: 'Coat to Stuart, $15.00,' showing that they were compelled, now and then, even to 'trade out' their earnings. The litigation was as limited in importance as in extent. There were no great corporations, as in this progressive day, retaining for counsel the brains of the bar in every county seat, but the greatest as well as the least had to join the general scramble for practice."

Lincoln was then twenty-nine years of age and was still a member of the State Legislature. His practice was naturally limited to the usual pioneer litigation, such as assaults, trespass on real estate, daily contracts between the neighbors, accounts, notes, and the like. His spare time he devoted to further study of the law, public addresses, and to faithful and regular attendance upon "The Young Men's Lyceum."

Lincoln's partnership with Stuart was comparatively brief, only about four years, from 1837 to 1841. Much of this time Stuart was actively engaged in political campaigns or in his congressional sittings at Washington. Hence he was able to give but little attention to their legal practice at Springfield. Necessarily this fell on Lincoln's shoulders. The routine and details of his early office work thus forced upon him were doubtless of great value in training and discipline as well as practical experience.

Litigation in that early day was not as important, when measured by the amount involved or the complexity of the legal problems, as it was in later years, and yet we find many very important cases, so far as principle was concerned, intrusted to the new firm. During these four short years at least a half a dozen of the firm's cases were taken to the Supreme Court, and Lincoln appeared in the argument of three or four of them.

But the biggest lawyer in Springfield had his eye upon the rising young barrister. It was none other than the leader of the Springfield bar, who could no doubt have had his choice of any lawyer in Springfield for a junior partner.

As Stuart, with his legal and political standing in that community, had paid Lincoln a very high compliment by inviting him to be his junior partner in 1837, so now, in 1841, Lincoln received a much higher compliment by being invited to become the junior partner of Judge Stephen F. Logan.

Logan had then the reputation of being the best "Nisi Prius lawyer in the State."

Herndon, who knew him personally and intimately, spoke of him as follows:

"Judge Logan was a very orderly but somewhat

technical lawyer. . . . He was assiduous in study and tireless in search of legal principles. He was industrious and very thrifty, delighted to make and save money, and died a rich man. . . . Lincoln was five years younger, and yet his mind and make-up so impressed Logan that he was invited into the partnership with him. Logan's example had a good effect on Lincoln, and it stimulated him to unusual endeavors. For the first time he realized the effectiveness of order and method in work, but his old habits eventually overcame him. . . . Logan was scrupulously exact, and used extraordinary care in the preparation of papers. His words were well chosen, and his style of composition was stately and formal."

This partnership between Logan and Lincoln lasted about two years. They were both candidates for Congress at the same time, and the presumption is, with more or less evidence to support it, that their rivalry brought some bitterness between them. At all events, it was at this time, in 1843, that Lincoln retired from the firm, and invited William H. Herndon, who was just beginning the practice of law, to become his junior partner.

Herndon himself says:

"I was young in the practice and was painfully aware of my want of ability and experience; but when he remarked in his earnest, honest way, 'Billy, I can trust you, if you can trust me,' I felt relieved, and accepted the generous proposal. It has always been a matter of pride with me that during our long partnership, continuing on until it was dissolved by the bullet of the assassin Booth, we never had any personal controversy or disagreement. I never stood in his way for political honors or office, and I believe we under-

stood each other perfectly. In after years, when he became more prominent, and our practice grew to respectable proportions, other ambitious practitioners undertook to supplant me in the partnership. One of the latter, more zealous than wise, charged that I was in a certain way weakening the influence of the firm. I am flattered to know that Lincoln turned on this last named individual with the retort 'I know my own business, I reckon. I know Billy Herndon better than anybody, and even if what you say of him is true I intend to stick by him.' "

While Lincoln was a partner of Logan's, Herndon relates the following incident:

"I have before me a letter written by Lincoln at this time to the proprietors of a wholesale store in Louisville, for whom suit had been brought, in which, after notifying the latter of the sale of certain real estate in satisfaction of their judgment, he adds: 'As to the real estate we cannot attend to it. We are not real estate agents, we are lawyers. We recommend that you give the charge of it to Mr. Isaac S. Britton, a trustworthy man, and one whom the Lord made on purpose for such business.'

Mr. Herndon comments:

"He gravely signs the firm name, Logan and Lincoln, to this unlawyerlike letter and sends it on its way. Logan never would have written such a letter."

Whether Logan "would have written such a letter" or not we do not know, neither need we care. Lincoln wrote it because he was true then, as he was true always, to his convictions as to what was and what was not a lawyer's business, and what he did in this case squares exactly with his sense of professional duty and honor and represents his own practical distinction of

what was "law" business and what was "real estate" business.

Lincoln was a lawyer, first, last, and all the time, and be it said in his honor that he never lowered the professional standards in his twenty-four years of practice.

He was not a "money-getter," neither was he anybody's "hired man." I think the public will most respectfully differ from Mr. Herndon in saying that this was an "unlawyerlike letter." This illustrates the difference between the point of view of Lincoln and the point of view of Herndon.

The prerogatives of the senior partner in a law firm seem to have been superior in that early day to what they are now.

Mr. Lincoln upon his retirement from the firm of Logan and Lincoln in 1843 seemed desirous of being the senior partner in a new firm, and it was really from the year 1843 forward that he developed and became distinguished as a great lawyer who won verdicts and judgments.

But his early campaigns for Congress upon his own account, as well as his campaigns for the Whig tickets upon the party's account consumed much of his time in his earlier years. His election to Congress in 1846 suspended for the time being his activities in the law.

At all events, what he did prior to that time was so largely preparatory to his future contests and triumphs that it deserves no further discussion here. The really great lawyer will appear upon his return to Springfield in 1849, and from thenceforward to his election as President.

CHAPTER VIII

LINCOLN THE LAWYER

(CONTINUED)

LINCOLN had just passed the fortieth mile-stone when, at the end of his one term in Congress, he returned from Washington to resume the practice of the law.

As his contact with the leading men of Springfield had stimulated him to a deeper and broader study of the law in his earlier days, so now the big, brainy men of Washington and the East whom he had met during these last two years had given him a new stimulus for further education and excellence in the law.

As never before he proceeded at once "to stir the gifts of God within him" in wider, deeper study of the law, the sciences, and history.

Herndon relates a marked change in Lincoln's pursuit of the law:

"I could notice a difference in Lincoln's movement as a lawyer from this time forward. He had begun to realize a certain lack of discipline—a want of mental training and method. Ten years had wrought some change in the law, and more in the lawyers, of Illinois. The conviction had settled in the minds of the people that the pyrotechnics of court-room and stump oratory did not necessarily imply extensive or profound ability in the lawyer who resorted to it. The courts were becoming graver and more learned, and the lawyer was

learning as a preliminary and indispensable condition to success that he must be a close reasoner, besides having at command a broad knowledge of the principles on which the statutory law is constructed. . . . And now he began to make up for time lost in politics by studying the law in earnest. No man had greater power of application than he. Once fixing his mind on any subject, nothing could interfere with or disturb him. Frequently I would go out on the circuit with him. We, usually, at the little country inns occupied the same bed. In most cases the beds were too short for him, and his feet would hang over the foot-board, thus exposing a limited expanse of shin bone. Placing a candle on a chair at the head of the bed, he would read and study for hours. I have known him to study in this position till two o'clock in the morning. Meanwhile I and others who chanced to occupy the same room would be safely and soundly asleep."

Holland, in his biography, at page 124, notes the same change in habits of study and research:

"On returning to his home, Mr. Lincoln entered upon the duties of his profession, and devoted himself to them through a series of years, less disturbed by diversions into State and national politics than he had been during any previous period of his business life. . . .

"Mr. Lincoln's lack of early advantages and the limited character of his education were constant subjects of regret with him. His intercourse with members of Congress and with the cultivated society of Washington had, without doubt, made him feel his deficiencies more keenly than ever before. . . .

"It was at this period that he undertook to improve himself somewhat by attention to mathematics, and actually mastered the first six books of Euclid."

Herndon confirms this fact as to Euclid and further relates that his study of Euclid was chiefly done upon the circuit while Lincoln's fellow lawyers were comfortably asleep.

Touching this study, Lincoln once said:

"In the course of my reading I constantly came upon the word 'demonstrate'—I thought at first that I understood its meaning, but soon became satisfied that I did not. I consulted Webster's Dictionary. That told of certain proof, 'proof beyond the probability of doubt'; but I could form no sort of idea what sort of proof that was.

"I consulted all the dictionaries and books of reference I could find, but with no better results. You might as well have defined blue to a blind man. At last I said, 'Lincoln, you can never make a lawyer if you do not understand what demonstrate means.' I studied Euclid until I could give any proposition in the first six books at sight. I then found out what demonstrate meant."

What a splendid lesson here, not only for the student and the lawyer, but also for every man that has to do with the study of any science where logic is a factor. To the jury it was a case of "demonstration," to the judge it was a case of "demonstration," to the public in a political argument it was likewise a case of "demonstration," and afterward when he became President of the United States his one great purpose was to "demonstrate" the wisdom and justice of his policy—the Union.

But we are now concerned with him as a lawyer. You will remember in the preceding chapter his views on legal ethics. Bear in mind that Lincoln's words there quoted were not 'glittering generalities.' They

were not mere theories or abstractions. They were the root and branch taken from his practice. In short, he put his ideals into his cases.

Lincoln realized reverently that the lawyer was first "an officer of the court" in the administration of justice and as such the attorney or agent of the public to do justice, before he became an attorney or agent of some client to win his cause.

His great ability in the conduct of cases became so familiar to the people of Illinois that no doubt he was often sought for by prospective clients to take causes that were unconscionable. At all events, before Lincoln would accept a retainer every cause had to be first tried out in the 'court of conscience.' This was God's court; it was Lincoln's court, and a favorable judgment had to be given here first before he proceeded into man's court with any cause either for plaintiff or defendant.

No case better illustrates this conscientious conviction of Lincoln than the following incident. A client in Lincoln's office was talking very earnestly and in low tone to Lincoln about a case in which he desired to employ him. One person in the office overheard the conversation and related Mr. Lincoln's reply, as follows, in a letter addressed to Mr. Herndon:

"Yes," he said, "we can doubtless gain your case for you; we can set a whole neighborhood at loggerheads; we can distress a widowed mother and her six fatherless children, and thereby get for you six hundred dollars to which you seem to have a legal claim, but which rightfully belongs, it appears to me, as much to the woman and her children as it does to you. You must remember that some things legally right are not morally right. We shall not take your case, but will

give you a little advice for which we will charge you nothing. You seem to be a sprightly, energetic man; we would advise you to try your hand at making six hundred dollars in some other way."

Many instances of this character might be cited. Indeed, after he got into the midst of a case, if he found out that his client had misrepresented things to him, had lied to him about the facts of the case, and it turned out during the progress of the trial that the judgment ought to be against his client, he not unfrequently would say so directly to the court. In one noted instance he abandoned the case.

Curtis in his biography quotes Leonard Swett, the great lawyer of Chicago, and the great personal and political friend of Lincoln, as follows:

"Once he (Lincoln) was prosecuting a civil suit, in the course of which evidence was introduced showing that his client was attempting a fraud. Lincoln rose and went to his hotel in deep disgust. The judge sent for him; he refused to come. 'Tell the judge,' he said, 'my hands are dirty; I came over to wash them.'"

Lincoln quit the case. His conduct will be a shock to some modern lawyers. But this was Lincoln's characteristic way of dealing with frauds and shams.

Frequently in the trial of a cause, if he had good reason to believe that his client was wrong, or if it was a criminal case that his client was guilty, he seemed to lose heart because he had lost the approval of his conscience, and left his associate to conduct the cause.

In one noted instance, where there was a large amount involved, he turned to his associate counsel and said:

"Our client is wrong. I can't proceed further with the case. You will have to conduct it alone."

Associate counsel did conduct it alone and won the case. He got a fee of nine hundred dollars. He offered to share it with Lincoln, but not a cent would he take. Lincoln believed it was "tainted money." His conscience could not approve of it.

One time, when he was engaged with Judge Parks in the defense of a prisoner charged with larceny, he turned to Parks and said:

"If you can say anything for the man, do it, I can't; if I attempt it, the jury will see I think he is guilty, and convict him."

Lincoln was once engaged in the defense of a prisoner who was charged with aggravated assault and battery. He was persuaded that the prosecuting witness had greatly exaggerated his account of the assault, and when the prosecuting attorney turned the witness over to Lincoln for cross-examination he merely asked him one question:

"Well, my friend, what ground did you and my client here fight over?"

The witness answered:

"About six acres."

"Well," said Mr. Lincoln, "don't you think this is an almighty small crop of fight to gather from such a big piece of ground?"

The answer was such as to laugh the whole case out of court.

One quality about Lincoln that his opposing counsel always feared, was that he would "ring in" something that they could not anticipate. An instance of his cleverness in this respect appears in a case in which he was opposing his former partner, Judge Logan.

Judge Logan had the closing argument and Lincoln

well knew his power and persuasiveness with jurors and undertook to caution them against being over-persuaded by the judge; that it was for them to look carefully to the evidence and the law as given by his honor, and not to put entire confidence in what Judge Logan might say, however plausible he might be. The judge himself was sometimes mistaken and didn't know it. As an evidence of Judge Logan's mistaken judgment Lincoln called attention to the fact that at that very time Judge Logan had made an error in putting on his shirt, the plaiting, instead of being in the front, was in the back. Lincoln implied that a man that didn't know enough to put on his shirt right might be mistaken on the facts or the law of a given case.

This pat reference to the judge's shirt absolutely unmanned him in his argument to the jury, and Lincoln won the case.

One of Lincoln's familiar sayings in the practice of the law was this:

"If I can free this case from technicalities and get it properly swung to the jury, I will win it."

As a rule he made the twelve men in the box feel that that jury was composed not of twelve but thirteen and that Lincoln, not the judge, was the thirteenth member.

He was so manifestly fair, not affectedly so, but sincerely so, that this quality of his mind and heart were constantly creeping out. He was always "Honest Abe."

Leonard Swett, gives the following account of Lincoln's methods in the trial of a case, whether to judge or jury:

"As he entered the trial where most lawyers would

object he would say he 'reckoned' it would be fair to let this in, or that; and sometimes, when his adversary could not quite prove what Lincoln knew to be the truth, he 'reckoned' it would be fair to admit the truth to be so-and-so. When he did object to the court, and when he heard his objections answered, he would often say, 'Well, I reckon I must be wrong.' Now, about the time he had practised this three-fourths through the case, if his adversary didn't understand him, he would wake up in a few minutes learning that he had feared the Greeks too late, and find himself beaten. He was wise as a serpent in the trial of a cause, but I have had too many scares from his blows to certify that he was harmless as a dove. When the whole thing was unravelled, the adversary would begin to see that what he was so blandly giving away was simply what he couldn't get and keep. By giving away six points and carrying the seventh he carried his case, and the whole case hanging on the seventh, he traded away everything which would give him the least aid in carrying that. Any man who took Lincoln for a simple-minded man would very soon wake up with his back in a ditch."

As before suggested, Lincoln always held to the idea of the ultimate justice of a case. What was right and fair under all the facts and circumstances; what was the just judgment that the court ought to enter? Anything that conflicted with his idea of justice, even though it were substantially settled law, Lincoln could not help but regard as more or less of a technical rule. He tried to induce courts and juries always to apply the rules of law in such a way as not to defeat justice.

One of the most difficult cases he had of this char-

acter, though involving a comparatively small amount, is related by Herndon* as follows:

"In the spring term of the Tazewell County Court in 1847, which at that time was held in the village of Tremont, I was detained as a witness an entire week. Lincoln was employed in several suits, and among them was one of Case vs. Snow Bros. The Snow Bros., as appeared in evidence (who were both minors), had purchased from an old Mr. Case what was then called a 'prairie team,' consisting of two or three yoke of oxen and prairie plow, giving therefor their joint note for some two hundred dollars; but when pay-day came refused to pay, pleading the minor act. The note was placed in Lincoln's hands for collection. The suit was called and a jury impanelled. The Snow Bros. did not deny the note, but pleaded through their counsel that they were minors, and that Mr. Case knew they were at the time of the contract and conveyance. All this was admitted by Mr. Lincoln, with his peculiar phrase, 'Yes, gentlemen, I reckon that's so.' The minor act was read and its validity admitted in the same manner. The counsel of the defendants were permitted without question to state all these things to the jury, and to show by the statute that these minors could not be held responsible for their contract. By this time you may well suppose that I began to be uneasy. 'What!' thought I, 'this good old man, who confided in these boys to be wronged in this way, and even his counsel, Mr. Lincoln, to submit in silence!' I looked at the court, Judge Treat, but could read nothing in his calm and dignified demeanor. Just then, Mr. Lincoln slowly got up, and in his strange, half-erect attitude and clear, quiet accent began:

* Vol. II, page 327.

'Gentlemen of the Jury, are you willing to allow these boys to begin life with this shame and disgrace attached to their character? If you are, I am not. The best judge of human character that ever wrote has left these immortal words for all of us to ponder:

> "'Good name in man or woman, dear my lord,
> Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
> Who steals my purse steals trash: 'tis something, nothing;
> 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
> But he that filches from me my good name
> Robs me of that which not enriches him
> And makes me poor indeed.'

"Then rising to his full height, and looking upon the defendants with the compassion of a brother, his long right arm extended toward the opposing counsel, he continued: 'Gentlemen of the jury, these poor innocent boys would never have attempted this low villany had it not been for the advice of these lawyers.' Then for a few minutes he showed how even the noble science of law may be prostituted. With a scathing rebuke to those who thus belittle their profession, he concluded: 'And now, gentlemen, you have it in your power to set these boys right before the world.' He pleaded for the young men only; I think he did not mention his client's name. The jury, without leaving their seats, decided that the defendants must pay the debt; and the latter, after hearing Lincoln, were as willing to pay it as the jury were determined they should. I think the entire argument lasted not above five minutes."

One of the cases that contributed most to Mr. Lincoln's reputation among the people of Illinois was known as the "Armstrong" case. It will be remem-

bered that upon Lincoln's going to New Salem, when twenty-two years of age, he soon came in contact with the Clary's Grove boys, whose leader was Jack Armstrong. They were the terror of that neighborhood. Later, however, they became very intimate friends. While Lincoln was not of them in habits, they somehow or other felt that he "belonged" at least as their idol, and Hannah Armstrong, the wife of Jack, furnished Abraham Lincoln many a meal and many a bed when he was sorely in need. She learned to love him also and Lincoln learned to love her.

Years passed by and her son, Duff Armstrong, was indicted for murder. Much as Lincoln disliked defenses in criminal cases, he could not deny the pleadings of Duff Armstrong's now widowed mother, to whom he felt under the greatest obligations.

The man, Norris, charged as the accomplice of Duff Armstrong, had already been convicted, and the evidence of that case disclosed very much incriminating evidence against Hannah Armstrong's son.

Mr. Lincoln's first effort, as it is of every capable, skilled lawyer, was to get the right kind of jury. The twelve men in the box were all comparatively young men, as Duff Armstrong was a young man. The examination of the State's witnesses was most carefully and cautiously conducted.

He never made the mistake in cross-examination that was once made by an overzealous counsel in what has become known as the "ear case." It is not irrelevant here.

A man was being tried in a far Western State on a charge of mayhem. The particular charge was that he bit off the prosecuting witness's ear and that in a drunken brawl.

At the time of the fight the witnesses for the State were so drunk that they could scarcely recollect the circumstances of the affair, and the prosecutor was forced to rely on one sober witness, who was exceedingly friendly to the defendant, but also, it must be said to his credit, he was not unfriendly to the truth. After putting a number of questions to the principal witness for the State, the answers to which were either indifferent or unsatisfactory, sufficient of the friendliness of the witness for the accused was elicited to secure from the court permission to put direct or leading questions to the witness.

"*Q.* Now, you say, Mr. Jones, that you did not see the defendant bite off the ear of the prosecuting witness, Brown?

"*A.* No, sir.

"*Q.* And do you mean to say that you did not see him biting at his ear?

"*A.* No, sir."

The prosecutor practically threw up his hands. He had failed to make a case, and passed the witness to the other side for cross-examination.

Any skilled and experienced counsel would simply have answered: "We have no cross-examination." But the turn of events had so taken everybody off his feet that counsel for the defendant in his zeal said: "Just a question or two."

"*Q.* Now, I understand you to say you did not see the defendant biting off Mr. Brown's ear?

"*A.* No.

"*Q.* You did not see him biting at his ear?

"*A.* No, sir.

"*Q.* You did not see anything that indicated that he had bitten off his ear?

"*A.* Well, I would not want to say that.
"*Q.* Well, what did you see?
"*A.* Well, I saw the defendant spit out an ear."

Lincoln never made such mistakes in cross-examination. He asked the right question at the right time and in the right way. He never pushed a witness too far, nor ever put himself in a hostile attitude to the witness, unless he was sure of his ground, sure that he would be able successfully to impeach him later.

The case had gone well for Mr. Lincoln until the star witness for the State was put upon the stand. His name was Allen. All eyes were turned to hear Allen's story, because he was the only witness that claimed to have seen the fatal blow struck at a distance of about one hundred and fifty feet from where the fatal assault took place. Allen testified that the assault took place at about eleven o'clock in the night time and that he saw Armstrong strike the deceased, Metzker, with a sling-shot. Mr. Lincoln asked him as to how he could see that distance at that time of night. Allen replied at once: "By the light of the moon."

Lincoln was prepared to meet this testimony, and, therefore, he gave the witness, Allen, all possible rope to repeat and to emphasize the fact of how clearly he had seen this blow struck, so that there was no possible chance of retracting it or qualifying it. Allen made the moon to shine that night like the noonday sun. Then Lincoln introduced the almanac of that year, a silent witness, but a thoroughly credible one.

The almanac showed that the moon had just completed its first quarter before midnight and that at the hour named by this star witness the moon was so near its setting that it was impossible for it to have

furnished any light by which Allen could have seen Armstrong strike the blow. Allen had been entirely discredited. The verdict was Lincoln's.

One or two biographers have endeavored to discredit Mr. Lincoln's professional honor in this case by charging that he used an old almanac and not the one of 1857, the year of the murder.

Again the almanac is its best witness. Numerous biographers have answered that charge by showing that the original account of the transaction, as reported by Lincoln, is absolutely correct, that the almanac of 1857 did support every claim made by Lincoln in behalf of Armstrong.

But more than that, if such almanac were not now available, Lincoln's whole professional career brands the other story as a lie, and if it had even been possible for him to indulge in such a vicious practice to mislead court and jury, it would have excited such discussion and opposition in Illinois in that day as to have resulted in a deserved disbarment. The bar of Illinois in that day was of too high standing to have suffered such an imposition upon court and jury to have gone either undiscovered or unpunished.

Considerable discussion has arisen by Lincoln's various biographers touching the statement made as to Lincoln's methods in court by one Judge Treat, who was at one time a member of the Supreme Court of Illinois.

One of Lincoln's biographers gives Judge Treat as authority for the following brief argument of Lincoln before the Supreme Court of Illinois:

"This is the first case I [Lincoln] ever have had in this court, and I, therefore, examined it with great care. As the court will perceive by looking at the

abstract of the record, the only question in the case is one of authority. I have not been able to find any authority to sustain my side of the case. But I have found several cases directly in point on the other side. I will now give these authorities to the court and then submit the case."

Several of Lincoln's biographers deny it and point to the fact that at the time Lincoln argued his first case in the Supreme Court of Illinois Judge Treat was not a member of that court. They say not only that Lincoln never used that language, but that it would have been highly improper to have done so.

It matters not whether it occurred at this time or some other time; that it frequently did occur is just what you would expect from a lawyer like Lincoln.

But the controversy is not important as to the time when it occurred. The fact of the matter is that Lincoln was always so fair, so frank with the court that there is nothing in these words in the slightest contradiction to his uniform attitude and conduct in the presence of a court of justice.

To Lincoln there was nothing sacred about a decided case, except its weight in reason and justice, and if the reason and justice of the case on trial was upon his side, Lincoln would plainly and persuasively present that side, notwithstanding some court may have decided otherwise.

A case of more than usual interest was one in which he had been retained to render certain service as an attorney-at-law in some taxation suits brought by the State of Illinois against the Illinois Central Railroad. Upon the completion of that litigation Lincoln rendered a bill to the railroad company for two thousand dollars. The bill was rejected.

Some of his biographers have related, with no show of probability, however, that the rejection was made by the chief engineer of that company, one George B. McClellan. The facts are all against this contention. The bill, however, was rejected. Lincoln felt much hurt, and conferred with his associates at the bar. They rather severely criticised Lincoln, not because the bill was too large, but because it was too little. They urged that the bill should be presented for five thousand dollars, which was done. Again the bill was rejected, suit was brought and judgment finally taken in favor of Lincoln. Lincoln collected the money upon the judgment, brought it to the office, divided it without any book entry, carefully wrapped up two thousand five hundred dollars, and labelled it "Herndon's half."

Some of his biographers have urged that the suit against the Illinois Central Railroad was entirely friendly. Without any facts to support this claim, save that Lincoln was subsequently retained by the Illinois Central Railroad, the presumption is the other way. Men who are willing to pay claims in a substantial amount do not ordinarily submit to a suit to collect them.

No doubt Lincoln's great ability in the case was, in itself, sufficient to urge the advisability upon some of the officers of the railroad company for future employment, wholly independent of the issue in the five-thousand-dollar case.

Another case that attracted a great deal of interest, and has been given much space in his various biographies was the "Manny" or "McCormick" case, as it is sometimes known.

So many different accounts have been given con-

cerning this case that they are irreconcilable, save in one particular, and that is that Mr. Lincoln was very rudely treated by associate counsel in the case.

The case was one involving a patent brought by the McCormick Company against one Manny on the charge of infringement of patents in the United States Court at Cincinnati, and was heard there during the fall term of 1855.

For plaintiff there appeared a distinguished lawyer from Baltimore, Reverdy Johnson, and a Mr. Dickerson, from Philadelphia, an expert patent lawyer.

Mr. George Harding was the expert patent lawyer from Philadelphia for the defendant, and Lincoln had been retained by one of the defendants, Mr. Emerson, of Rockford, Illinois, to match as a lawyer of general and successful practice in the trial of cases the distinguished and skilled Johnson from Baltimore.

When Lincoln arrived at Cincinnati he learned that other parties interested with the defendant had also employed Mr. Edwin M. Stanton, formerly of Steubenville, Ohio, but now of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, a college-bred man, and a lawyer of large ability and successful experience.

Up to the time of their meeting at Cincinnati Mr. Stanton did not know of Mr. Lincoln having been retained in behalf of the defendant, and Lincoln evidently did not know that Mr. Stanton had been retained likewise in behalf of the defendant.

Upon meeting Lincoln, it is said that Stanton inquired: "Where did this long-legged, long-armed person come from and who is it?" Other things were said no doubt, some of them not fit for public record.

At all events, Lincoln did not participate in the trial. He did not assist in the examination of the wit-

nesses. He did not make any argument to the court, nor file any brief in the case, though he had been retained by one of the defendants for that purpose.

Harding made an argument as an expert patent lawyer, which was supplemented by a very able argument by Stanton. Lincoln, it is said, after being crowded out of the case, tendered Harding and Stanton a brief that he had prepared, which they cordially consigned to the waste-basket without examining it.

As a further evidence of their lack of cordiality and general agreeableness toward Lincoln, it should be said with entire truth that Judge McLean gave a little dinner, during the early part of the trial, in which all the counsel in the case were present as honored guests. Lincoln, however, was not present, and neither was he invited to be present.

Lincoln remained in Cincinnati a few days, and then went home to Springfield much depressed and deeply grieved over the treatment accorded him by counsel in that case. Stanton had brutally kicked him out in a manner that could not be misunderstood by Lincoln. Stanton was as big in mind as he was bad in manners, and his conduct toward Lincoln and the public then and later, as we shall see, furnish abundant evidence of his dominating and haughty characteristics.

Lincoln had one marked peculiarity that deserves mention here, and that is, that he rarely detailed his personal or professional grievances to his friends, and no fact is better established than that he never had any intimates. He never confided the secrets, especially the unpleasant and disagreeable secrets of his personal, professional, or political life to any other living soul. So that we have little account of what

Lincoln himself said or thought of Stanton's treatment of him in this case at Cincinnati.

Herndon says:

"Lincoln felt that Stanton had not only been very discourteous to him, but had purposely ignored him in the case and that he had received rather rude, if not unkind, treatment from all hands. Stanton in his brusque and abrupt way, it is said, described him as 'a long, lank creature from Illinois, wearing a dirty linen duster for a coat, on the back of which the perspiration had splotched wide stains that resembled a map of the continent.'"

We may feel sure from what we know of Lincoln personally that if he (Lincoln) felt that Stanton had been "discourteous," "had purposely ignored him," "had been rude" that Stanton, as a matter of fact, had been doubly so.

When we lawyers realize the courtesy due from one counsel to another, no matter what our personal feeling may be, Stanton's treatment of Lincoln seems not only outrageous, but almost unpardonable.

Herndon himself further says that Lincoln once said to him that he had been "roughly handled by that man Stanton," and that he had overheard Stanton saying: "Where did that long-armed creature come from and what can he expect to do in this case?"

Stanton's relations to Lincoln in this case are given at length because Lincoln and Stanton will have much to do with each other in another chapter.

CHAPTER IX

LINCOLN THE LAWYER

(CONTINUED)

WHILE a partner of Herndon in 1858, Lincoln made the following notes for an argument to the court:

"Legislation and adjudication must follow and conform to the progress of society.

"The progress of society now begins to produce cases of the transfer for debts of the entire property of railroad corporations; and to enable transferees to use and enjoy the transferred property legislation and adjudication begin to be necessary.

"Shall this class of legislation just now beginning with us be general or special?

"Section Ten of our Constitution requires that it should be general, if possible. (Read the Section.)

"Special legislation always trenches upon the judicial department; and in so far violates Section Two of the Constitution. (Read it.)

"Just reasoning—policy—is in favor of general legislation—else the legislature will be loaded down with the investigation of small cases—a work which the courts ought to perform, and can perform much more perfectly. How can the Legislature rightly decide the facts between P. & H. and S. C. & Co.?

"It is said that under a general law, whenever a R. R. Co. gets tired of its debts, it may transfer fraudulently to get rid of them. So they may—so may individuals; and which—the Legislature or the courts—is best suited to try the question of fraud in either case?

"It is said, if a purchaser have acquired legal rights, let him not be robbed of them, but if he needs legislation let him submit to just terms to obtain it.

"Let him, say we, have general law in advance (guarded in every possible way against fraud), so that, when he acquires a legal right, he will have no occasion to wait for additional legislation; and if he has practised fraud let the courts so decide."

The student will note the orderly arrangement of this argument, the logical steps in which the notes are made, how the legal and the ethical argument is presented together so that each re-enforces the other.

One of the noted cases that Lincoln had for trial was known as the Wright case. A widow had been defrauded of a large part of her pension by a pension agent who had secured for her an allowance of $800 from the government, for which he had charged her the outrageous fee of $400. The widow was old, crippled, and needy. She sought Lincoln to retain him to recover the $400, less a reasonable fee.

Lincoln's notes for the argument of this case are as follows:

"No contract.—Not professional services.—Unreasonable charge.—Money retained by Def't not given by Pl'ff.—Revolutionary War.—Describe Valley Forge privations.—Ice.—Soldier's bleeding feet.—Pl'ff's husband.—Soldier leaving home for army.—Skin Def't.—Close."

Herndon's account of it is very interesting, including a portion of Lincoln's argument. He says:

"As he reached that point in his speech wherein he narrated the hardened action of the defendant in fleecing the old woman of her pension his eyes flashed,

and throwing aside his handkerchief, which he held in his right hand, he fairly launched into him. His speech for the next five or ten minutes justified the declaration of Davis, that he was 'hurtful in denunciation and merciless in castigation.' There was no rule of court to restrain him in his argument, and I never, either on the stump or on other occasions in court, saw him so wrought up. Before he closed, he drew an ideal picture of the plaintiff's husband, the deceased soldier, parting with his wife at the threshold of their home, and kissing their little babe in the cradle, as he started for the war. 'Time rolls by,' he said in conclusion; 'the heroes of '76 have passed away and are encamped on the other shore. The soldier has gone to rest, and now, crippled, blinded, and broken, his widow comes to you and to me, gentlemen of the jury, to right her wrongs. She was not always thus. She was once a beautiful young woman. Her step was as elastic, her face as fair, and her voice as sweet as any that rang in the mountains of old Virginia. But now she is poor and defenceless. Out here on the prairies of Illinois, many hundreds of miles away from the scenes of her childhood, she appeals to us, who enjoy the privileges achieved for us by the patriots of the Revolution, for our sympathetic aid and manly protection. All I ask is, shall we befriend her?' The speech made the desired impression on the jury. Half of them were in tears, while the defendant sat in the court room, drawn up and writhing under the fire of Lincoln's fierce invective. . . . When the judgment was paid we remitted the proceeds to her and made no charge for our services."

When a *man* is *mad*, he is mad clear through, and that was true of Lincoln in this case. He hated a

sham and a counterfeit, whether it be in a person or a policy.

But when the widow was in the wrong he was equally frank to tell her so and refuse her case.

An instance is related wherein Lincoln was once asked to examine the title to a piece of valuable land owned by a widow. Lincoln himself surveyed the land and carefully examined its title, and the liens thereon. After taking his survey and the records into full consideration, together with the facts that the widow was able to give him, he told her frankly that she ought to pay a certain sum to the heirs of a former grantor. To this the widow entered strenuous objection. Lincoln, however, told her that unless she did so he would drop the case. Finally, with great reluctance, she consented, paid the amount, and Lincoln himself distributed it to the various heirs.

After all, it appears that each case had to stand upon its own bottom. It had to square with justice, and, unless his conscience approved, he refused the retainer.

Another instance well illustrates the ethics of Lincoln in the practice of the law, and as well the difference between him and Herndon in their ethical standards. A suit had been brought against one of their clients involving a large sum of money. For some reason or other Lincoln and Herndon were not ready for trial. Herndon, having charge of the case, did all that he could to postpone the trial. He says, concerning the case:*

"We dared not make an affidavit for continuance, founded on facts, because no such pertinent and material facts as the law contemplated existed. Our case for the time seemed hopeless. One morning, however, I

* Vol. I, page 326.

accidentally overheard a remark from Stuart indicating his fear lest a certain fact should happen to come into our possession. I felt some relief, and at once drew up a fictitious plea, averring as best I could the substance of the doubts I knew existed in Stuart's mind. The plea was as skilfully drawn as I knew how, and was framed as if we had the evidence to sustain it. The whole thing was a sham, but so constructed as to work the desired continuance, because I knew that Stuart and Edwards believed the facts were as I pleaded them. This was done in the absence and without the knowledge of Lincoln. The plea could not be demurred to, and the opposing counsel dared not take the issue on it. It perplexed them sorely. At length, before further steps were taken, Lincoln came into court. He looked carefully over all the papers in the case, as was his custom, and seeing my ingenious subterfuge asked, 'Is this seventh plea a good one?' Proud of the exhibition of my skill I answered that it was. 'But,' he inquired, incredulously, 'is it founded on fact?' I was obliged to respond in the negative, at the same time following up my answer with an explanation of what I had overheard Stuart intimate, and of how these alleged facts could be called facts if a certain construction were put upon them. I insisted that our position was justifiable, and that our client must have time or be ruined. I could see at once it failed to strike Lincoln as just right. He scratched his head thoughtfully and asked, 'Hadn't we better withdraw that plea? You know it's a sham, and a sham is very often but another name for a lie. Don't let it go on record. The cursed thing may come staring us in the face long after this suit has been forgotten.' The plea was withdrawn. By some

agency—nct our own—the case was continued and our client's interests were saved."

Herndon entirely misconceives Mr. Lincoln's reason for having the sham plea withdrawn, on "account of the record." It was not on "account of the record," but on account of the right of the thing. He was so keen for justice that he could not knowingly do anything unjust; neither would he permit it to be done.

I may have devoted more time than some would think necessary to relating particular incidents and instances of his practice, but I am persuaded that Lincoln was nature's great jurist, and, therefore, his ideas, as well as ideals of justice, as they were expressed and experienced in his every-day life, as the lawyer, are of vital interest to any student of Lincoln, and should be of special interest to lawyers who believe in a higher and nobler code of ethics for the profession.

Indeed, it is evidence of the fact that he was a great natural jurist, that whenever the judge on the circuit was absent for any reason, the one lawyer, above all others, that was unanimously chosen to sit instead of the absent judge and proceed with the trial of causes that day assigned, was Lincoln.

Some of his rules of practice are worthy of further note, not only as a matter of interest in illustrating his character, but also of emulation in the profession.

"In law it is good policy never to plead what you need not, lest you oblige yourself to prove what you cannot."

Once he said to Herndon:

"Billy, don't shoot too high—aim lower and the common people will understand you. They are the ones you want to reach—at least they are the ones you ought to reach. The educated and refined people

will understand you anyway. If you aim too high your ideas will go over the heads of the masses and only hit those who need no hitting."

Herndon overstates nothing in Lincoln's favor when he says:

"Lincoln could look a long distance ahead and calculate the triumph of right. With him justice and truth were paramount. If to him a thing seemed untrue he could not in his nature simulate truth. His retention by a man to defend a lawsuit did not prevent him from throwing it up in its most critical stage if he believed he was espousing an unjust cause. This extreme conscientiousness and disregard of the alleged sacredness of the professional cloak robbed him of much so-called success at the bar."

A higher tribute no man can pay another.

The query comes to many of us, can a man with such high standards of personal integrity and professional honor be successful in the practice of the law? If large fees are the index of professional success, if large corporation retainers are the index of professional success, if fifty or one hundred thousand dollars annual income be the index of professional success, then Abraham Lincoln was not a successful lawyer.

His annual fees rarely aggregated more than two or three thousand dollars, and he was by all standards counted a poor man. He says something on this subject himself when in New York to deliver the Cooper Union speech. The day before he met an old friend from Springfield who had recently come to New York and engaged in business. The talk on Broadway was substantially as follows. Said Mr. Lincoln:

"How have you been getting along since leaving the West?"

"I have made $100,000 and lost all," was the reply. Then his friend said:

"How is it with you, Mr. Lincoln?"

"Oh, very well," said he, "I have the cottage at Springfield and about $8,000 in money. If they make me Vice President with Seward, as some say they will, I hope I shall be able to increase it to $20,000; and that is as much as any man ought to want."

If, however, painstaking, efficient, successful practice for a large clientage of every kind and nature in the nisi prius courts, as well as in the Supreme Court of his State, and also a number of cases in the Federal Courts, are any exponent of a lawyer's success at the bar, then Abraham Lincoln must be acknowledged as one of the first and biggest lawyers of Illinois.

From the time he returned from his service in Congress, in 1849, until his nomination for the presidency, there is no doubting that he had more cases during those eleven years in the Supreme Court of Illinois than any other lawyer in the State.

From the commencement of his practice to its close, the record shows that he had more than one hundred and seventy-five cases in the Supreme Court of Illinois, a record surpassed by few men, if any, in that State or any other in that day.

What his fellow lawyers said of him after his death will illustrate many sides of his personal and professional character.

Shortly after Lincoln's death in 1865, the Supreme Court of Illinois heard obituary addresses in his honor. On that occasion, Judge Caton said in presenting the resolutions:

"He (Mr. Lincoln) understood the relations of things, and hence his deductions were rarely wrong,

from any given state of facts. So he applied the principles of law to the transactions of men with great clearness and precision. He was a close reasoner. He reasoned by analogy, and enforced his views by apt illustration. His mode of speaking was generally of a plain and unimpassioned character, and yet he was the author of some of the most beautiful and eloquent passages in our language, which, if collected, would form a valuable contribution to American literature. The most punctilious honor ever marked his professional and private life."

Judge Breese, responding to the resolutions, said:

"For my single self, I have for a quarter of a century regarded Mr. Lincoln as the finest lawyer I ever knew, and of a professional bearing so high-toned and honorable as justly, and without derogating from the claims of others, entitling him to be presented to the profession as a model well worthy of the closest imitation."

Judge Thomas Drummond, of Chicago, then a member of the Federal Court in the city, upon this same occasion said:

"I have no hesitation in saying that he was one of the ablest lawyers I have ever known. With a voice by no means pleasant, and, indeed, when excited, in its shrill tones, sometimes almost disagreeable; without any of the personal graces of the orator; without much in the outward man indicating superiority of intellect; without great quickness of perception—still, his mind was so vigorous, his comprehension so exact and clear, and his judgment so sure, that he easily mastered the intricacies of his profession, and became one of the ablest reasoners and most impressive speakers at our bar. With a probity of character

known of all, with an intuitive insight into the human heart, with a clearness of statement which was itself an argument, with uncommon power and felicity of illustration,—often, it is true, of a plain and homely kind,—and with that sincerity and earnestness of manner which carried conviction, he was, perhaps, one of the most successful jury lawyers we have ever had in the state. *He always tried a case fairly and honestly. He never intentionally misrepresented the evidence of a witness or the argument of an opponent. He met both squarely, and, if he could not explain the one or answer the other, substantially admitted it. He never misstated the law according to his own intelligent view of it.*"

Judge David Davis, then of the Supreme Court of the United States, delivered a eulogy on Lincoln as a lawyer at Indianapolis, in which he said:

"In all the elements that constitute the great lawyer, he (Mr. Lincoln) had few equals. He was great both at Nisi Prius and before an appellate tribunal. He seized the strong points of a case, and presented them with clearness and great compactness. A vein of humor never deserted him, and he was always able to chain the attention of court and jury when the cause was the most uninteresting, by the appropriateness of his anecdotes."

Arnold, one of his biographers, and also a fellow lawyer, at Indianapolis, in speaking of both Douglas and Lincoln, said:

'Both were strong jury lawyers. Lincoln was, on the whole, the strongest we ever had in Illinois. Both were distinguished for their ability in seizing and bringing out distinctly and clearly the real points in a case. Both were happy in the examination of witnesses, but

I think Lincoln was the stronger of the two in cross-examination."

Lincoln lived the lawyer and loved the law, but more than all else he lived and loved justice.

He was the chancellor in the court of conscience before he was the counsellor in a court of law.

Whenever there was conflict in the judgments of these two courts with Lincoln, the former was paramount.

CHAPTER X

LINCOLN THE LOGICIAN

"Prove all things. Hold fast to that which is good."—St. Paul.

"Reason is the life of the law; nay, the common law itself is nothing else but reason . . . the law which is perfection of reason."—Sir Edward Coke.

Probably he never read John Stuart Mill, Doctor Whateley, or Sir William Hamilton, yet in logic he was the peer of all of them. But what is logic? says some one. Boiled down, it is only the "science or art of exact reasoning" or "the laws according to which the processes of pure thinking should be conducted" or "the science of the laws of thought."

Lincoln was, first, last, and all the time a "thinker." In speaking he was merely telling the thought on the platform. In writing he was merely telling the thought on paper.

Reason, calm, candid, calculating reason, was the gift of God, as Paul characterizes it, which bridged his "passion for knowledge" to his "passion for justice." It was the gift by which he sought and obtained dominion over his fellow men.

Herndon, his old partner, who associated with him in the law office for nearly a score of years, had extraordinary opportunity of observing the mental powers and operations of Lincoln, and what he has written may well command our attention:

"He had no faith, and no respect for 'say so's,' come though they might from tradition or authority. Thus everything had to run through the crucible, and be

tested by the fires of his analytic mind; and when at last he did speak, his utterances rang out with the clear and keen ring of gold upon the counters of the understanding. He reasoned logically through analogy and comparison. All opponents dreaded his originality of idea, his condensation, definition, and force of expression; and woe be to the man who hugged to his bosom a secret error if Lincoln got on the chase of it. . . . His conscience, his heart, and all the faculties and qualities of his mind bowed submissively to the despotism of his reason. He lived and acted from the standard of reason—that throne of logic, home of principle—the realm of Deity in man. It is from this point Mr. Lincoln must be viewed. Not only was he cautious, patient, and enduring; not only had he concentration and great continuity of thought; but he had profound analytical power. His vision was clear, and he was emphatically the master of statement. His pursuit of the truth, as before mentioned, was indefatigable. He reasoned from well-chosen principles with such clearness, force, and directness that the tallest intellects in the land bowed to him. He was the strongest man I ever saw, looking at him from the elevated standpoint of reason and logic. He came down from that height with irresistible and crashing force. His Cooper Institute and other printed speeches will prove this; but his speeches before the courts—especially the Supreme Court of Illinois—if they had been preserved, would demonstrate it still more plainly." *

This mental sketch is a splendid summary of our logician, but it falls short of the methods which Lincoln used in bringing about the triumphs of his reason.

* Herndon, vol. II, pp. 304 *et seq.*

If the great problem of our education is to find out how to teach and train the mind of our youth, how to think, how to reason clearly, correctly, and conclusively, then it is vitally important that we should study this great "thinker" and "reasoner," God-made and self-made, certainly not school-made, for the purpose of ascertaining and emulating the ways and means he employed in the study of any subject, and how he proceeded to demonstrate the relation of that subject to some great legal principle or cause, or its natural and necessary relation to the betterment and happiness of our humanity.

Early in life he exhibited great power of mental concentration. He would centralize all his mental forces upon the subject under investigation to the exclusion of everything and everybody else.

Herndon* notes this quality in the following language:

"From a mental standpoint he was one of the most energetic young men in his day. He dwelt altogether in the land of thought. . . . His powers of concentration were intense, and in the ability through analysis to strip bare a proposition he was unexcelled. His thoughtful and investigating mind dug down after ideas, and never stopped till bottom facts were reached."

Herndon further says:†

"When Lincoln entered the domain of investigation he was a severe and persistent thinker, and had wonderful endurance; hence he was abstracted, and for that reason at times was somewhat unsocial, reticent, and uncommunicative."

Lincoln said during the war, in talking about the

* Vol. I, pages 39–41. † Vol. II, page 133.

"Trent Affair," and also in talking about Maximilian in Mexico, "one war at a time." So in his study it was "one subject at a time."

Let us not forget here that Lincoln in his early life was a surveyor. What he learned in a practical way in the survey of some given specific lot or land he applied when surveying some given or specific fact or principle. His paramount "passion for knowledge" heretofore discussed moved him to use his mental compass and chain so that he would "run the courses and distances from monument to monument" in surveying all the facts or the legal principles involved in any given case with just the same thoroughness and exactness as he did when he surveyed the concrete land.

As he himself has said he "bounded it on the north, bounded it on the east, bounded it on the south, and bounded it on the west."

He would proceed substantially after this manner: Fact A is bounded on the north by causes 1 and 2, on the east by associations 3, 4, and 5, on the south by consequences 6, 7, and 8, on the west by opposition 9, 10, and 11.

This was the method of the surveyor. It was the old lesson in geography by virtue of which the student fixed the location of a township, a county, a State or a country, by giving its geographical boundaries.

This very simplicity was one of the great secrets of his mental strength.

Each fact was considered in its causal relation with other facts. Lincoln not only wanted to know the cause of the fact and the consequences from that fact, but he went back to the original question itself, the question back of all others—is it in fact a "fact"?

After he had carefully and comprehensively surveyed all the facts relating to any given situation, it was a Lincoln characteristic, stamping all his methods and arguments in court, as well as his public speeches and presidential papers, to discriminate between the essential and controlling facts and principles of any given case or cause, and the unimportant and inconsequential. He was continually separating the wheat from the chaff, the ear from the shuck.

He was Nature's great jurist. Whether the question was one of fact or law, whether it was one of a truth or a principle, he presented both sides of the cause in every forum, judicial or popular, with such evident and considerate fairness that his adversaries were often surprised that he had, not infrequently, conceded to them some strength that they had not even claimed. His concessions, his yieldings, however, were not what he conceived to be the vital issues in the case. Those he stuck to with a bulldog tenacity.

Clear thinking is the first essential to correct thinking, and clearness of conception was the first thing for which Lincoln labored. To convey that clear conception to others was his second great purpose; as he himself has often said, he sought to put it in language plain enough "for any boy I knew to comprehend."

Next, having reached a conclusion through a course of reasoning in his own mind, he proceeds to demonstrate the truth and soundness of his position in the simplest terms of speech, so as to persuade others to his way of thinking and to the support of his cause.

Constantly he has before him the word "demonstrate," as to which he was quoted in an earlier chapter, but which will bear repetition here in discussing his logic.

Lincoln soliloquized as follows:

" 'Lincoln, you can never make a lawyer, if you do not understand what demonstrate means.' I studied Euclid until I could give any proposition in the first six books at sight. I then found out what 'demonstrate' meant."

In making his demonstration it is strikingly significant that his great addresses in law, government, or politics were usually bottomed upon some parable or proposition from the Bible, some primary legal axiom, or political proposition from the Declaration of Independence. The first was his Magna Charta of morals and conduct, the last his Magna Charta of liberty and democracy. No better example of this method can be found than in the Springfield speech of 1858.

Here his first proposition, which served as his major premise of argument, was a familiar or undisputed fact or principle from the Bible to which all men, or most men, must agree.

Not unfrequently he would take this basic fact or proposition from some statement or admission of the adversary, as he did in the great Cooper Union speech in New York City in 1860.

After having laid down his major premise, he would then follow it up with his minor premises with such clearness of statement, closeness of reasoning, marshalling all the evidence, all the facts, as a great military commander does his troops upon the one given point of attack, all to prove to the point of probability or to the point of moral certainty the truth or wisdom of the proposition in question.

After making his demonstration to the satisfaction of the average man, if the proposition were one involving some human or great public interest, he then

followed it with a simple, sincere, straightforward, dedication of himself and his honor to that cause.

Where did he get this order which he habitually followed in his discussions on law or government? He does not definitely advise us. Neither do any of his biographers.

It is, however, more than passing strange that Lincoln's early acquaintance with, and study of, the Declaration of Independence brought him directly and intimately in touch with this method of presentation and argument. That Declaration of Independence is naturally divisible into those same three parts, declaration, demonstration, dedication. It is most natural for us to presume that Lincoln, who studied and quoted the Declaration of Independence more frequently than any other American statesman of his own time, or any other, should have been strikingly impressed with the logical order so plainly and powerfully put in the Declaration of Independence, by his great prototype, Thomas Jefferson.

From the time Lincoln first entered politics in 1832, when but twenty-three years of age, until his martyrdom in 1865, it is the logician, the thinker, the reasoner, that we meet at every turn of the road, and all the while he is dealing with matters of human interest, matters that are cardinal and controlling in any given situation; and when he has presented his cause and offered his proof in support thereof, by a course of reasoning amounting to a "demonstration," he could confidently submit it to the people in the belief that he would persuade them, or a majority of them, to the Lincoln view of things.

Lincoln's ability as a logician had its severest test when he, as the "big giant" of the Republican party

of Illinois, met the "little giant" of the Democratic party of Illinois, Stephen A. Douglas, in political debate, in 1858.

Herndon says* concerning Lincoln and Douglas:

"History furnishes few characters whose lives and careers were so nearly parallel as those of Lincoln and Douglas. They met for the first time at the legislature in Vandalia in 1834, where Lincoln was a member of the house of representatives and Douglas was in the lobby. The next year Douglas was also a member. In 1839 both were admitted to practice in the supreme court of Illinois on the same day. In 1841 both courted the same young lady. In 1846 both represented Illinois in congress at Washington, the one in the upper and the other in the lower House. In 1858 they were opposing candidates for United States Senator; and finally, to complete the remarkable counterpart, both were candidates for the presidency in 1860. While it is true that their ambitions ran in parallel lines, yet they were exceedingly unlike in all other particulars. Douglas was short,—something over five feet high,—heavy set, with a large head, broad shoulders, deep chest, and striking features. He was polite and affable, but fearless. He had that unique trait, magnetism, fully developed in his nature, and that attracted a host of friends and readily made him a popular idol. He had had extensive experience in debate, and had been trained by contact for years with the great minds and orators in congress. He was full of political history, well informed on general topics, eloquent almost to the point of brilliancy, self-confident to the point of arrogance, and a dangerous competitor in every respect. What he lacked in ingenuity he made up in

* Vol. II., page 72.

strategy, and if in debate he could not tear down the structure of his opponent's argument by a direct and violent attack, he was by no means reluctant to resort to a strained restatement of the latter's position or to the extravagance of ridicule. Lincoln knew his man thoroughly and well. He had often met Douglas on the stump; was familiar with his tactics, and though fully aware of his 'want of fixed political morals,' was not averse to measuring swords with the elastic and flexible 'Little Giant.'

"Lincoln himself was constructed on an entirely different foundation. His base was plain common sense, direct statement, and the inflexibility of logic. In physical make-up he was cold—at least not magnetic—and made no effort to dazzle people by his bearing. He cared nothing for a following, and though he had often before struggled for a political prize, yet in his efforts he never had strained his well-known spirit of fairness or open love of the truth. He analyzed everything, laid every statement bare, and by dint of his broad reasoning powers and manliness of admission inspired his hearers with deep conviction of his earnestness and honesty. Douglas may have electrified the crowds with his eloquence or charmed them with his majestic bearing and dexterity in debate, but as each man, after the meetings were over and the applause had died away, went to his home, his head rang with Lincoln's logic and appeal to manhood."

In the campaign of 1858 no political contest from coast to coast held the attention of the public like the "joint discussion" between Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln in the State of Illinois.

The debates were held beginning August 21 to October 15 inclusive. They were seven in number, one

held in each congressional district so as to cover the entire State.

Douglas was the Democratic candidate for United States senator as his own successor. Lincoln had been unanimously nominated as a candidate for the same office by the Republican State Convention of Illinois, held at Springfield on June 17.

These seven speeches interestingly and exhaustively cover the issues of that time, and in full occupy two hundred pages of closely printed matter. They merit the careful attention and study of every political student, of the debater, the orator, the logician, the linguist. They have an intense human interest in that they cover the history of our country upon the subject of slavery, as well as the fundamental principles of our government from its very beginning to the hour of discussion.

This debate takes us back to his life in Gentryville, when he stood upon the stump and talked to the trees, arguing pro and con upon the issues of the day, and his practice of "polemics," as he called it, in the debating societies of that early day, his labors in like line at New Salem, his "Lyceum" at Springfield. He was a "veritable gladiator" in debate.

It would be impossible to give the reader a proper view of his great logical powers without in some measure reviewing this extended debate.

CHAPTER XI

LINCOLN THE LOGICIAN

(CONTINUED)

DOUGLAS had demanded and received the concession of not only opening and closing the first debate, but of opening and closing the series. This placed Mr. Lincoln under a considerable handicap, owing to the fact that Senator Douglas had the vantage-ground of choosing and defining the issues of that debate.

In the popular judgment at least Lincoln was more or less forced against his will to follow Douglas's lead and to devote much of his time to answering Douglas's charges as to matters that were peculiarly personal and unimportant as to the great issues of that day, but which, the charge having been made, must receive some measure of answer.

The political finesse and personal adroitness of Douglas is nowhere more apparent than in the charges that he brought against Lincoln, to wit:

"1. That Trumbull, as an old-time Democrat, and Lincoln, as an old-time Whig, had formed an unholy combination to break up these two parties.

"2. That Lincoln was responsible for the abolition platform of 1854 at Springfield.

"3. That the Buchanan administration was fighting Douglas because he was against the Lecompton Constitutional Convention, and that Lincoln and Trumbull were in this 'conspiracy.'

"4. That Lincoln was guilty of political treason in attacking the 'Dred Scott decision.'

"5. That Lincoln, by virtue of his Springfield speech, was emphatically sectional, and was endeavoring to array the North against the South.

"6. That Lincoln stood for absolute equality between the black and white, socially and politically.

"7. That Lincoln's opposition to the Mexican War was unpatriotic and even treasonable."

No wonder that Lincoln should have characterized this style of argument on the part of Douglas in abandoning the great political issues of the day and devoting his time chiefly to personal politics by the following observation:

"Douglas is playing cuttle fish—a small species of fish that has no mode of defending himself when pursued except by throwing out a black fluid which makes the water so dark the enemy cannot see it, and thus escapes."

Upon the other hand, Lincoln strenuously endeavored to centre the debate upon the great questions of that day, and as far as he could, with due deference to the position of his opponent, discussed the big questions at issue along the following several lines:

1. That slavery was a great evil and a violation of the fundamental principle of our government as announced in the Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal."

2. That our fathers, while recognizing slavery under the Constitution, believed that it was "in the course of ultimate extinction."

3. That the Kansas-Nebraska Act, as a piece of legislation by Congress, and the Dred Scott decision

as an unconstitutional piece of legislation by a court, had reversed the policy of "ultimate extinction" by the fathers and aided and encouraged the "further spread of it" (slavery).

4. That Douglas so-called "squatter sovereignty" was a sham and a fallacy.

5. That while he (Lincoln) believed slavery to be wrong, nevertheless he stood for giving to the slave-masters of the South the full and complete protection in the possession and enjoyment of their slaves as declared in the Constitution; in short, that there should be no disturbance or interference with the domestic institutions in the States of the South.

Upon the first proposition he said:

"But I hold that, notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas he is not my equal in many respects—certainly not in color, perhaps not in moral or intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, *he is my equal, and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man.*"

Upon the second proposition he said:

"And when the Judge reminds me that I have often said to him that the institution of slavery has existed for eighty years in some States, and yet it does not exist in some others, I agree to the fact, and I account for it by looking at the position in which our fathers originally placed it—restricting it from the new Territories where it had not gone, and legislating to cut off its

source by the abrogation of the slave-trade, thus putting the seal of legislation *against its spread.* The public mind *did* rest in the belief that it was in the course of ultimate extinction. But lately, I think—and in this I charge nothing on the Judge's motives—lately, I think, that he, and those acting with him, have placed that institution on a new basis, which looks to the *perpetuity and nationalization of slavery.* And while it is placed upon this new basis, I say, and I have said, that I believe we shall not have peace upon the question until the opponents of slavery arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or, on the other hand, that its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South. Now, I believe if we could arrest the spread, and place it where Washington and Jefferson and Madison placed it, it *would be* in the course of ultimate extinction, and the public mind *would,* as for eighty years past, believe that it was in the course of ultimate extinction. The crisis would be past, and the institution might be let alone for a hundred years, if it should live so long, in the States where it exists; yet it would be going out of existence in the way best for both the black and the white races."

Upon the third proposition Lincoln called attention to the fact that the old Missouri Compromise Act of 1820 had absolutely prohibited the further spread of slavery north of 36° 30′, save and except the State of Missouri—36° 30′ was the parallel of the southern boundary of that State—and that the Kansas-Nebraska Act, of which Douglas was the father and the Dred Scott decision, of which Chief Justice Taney was the

author, was a reversal of the policy of ultimate extinction favored by the fathers.

Upon this latter charge Lincoln said, first in the Springfield speech and later on in the debates:

"We cannot absolutely know that these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert; but when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places, and by different workmen,—Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James, for instance,—and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortises exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few,—not omitting the scaffolding,—or if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in,—in such a case we feel it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn before the first blow was struck."

Lincoln the logician nowhere more persuasively appeals than in his attack upon the Dred Scott decision. He said:

"This man sticks to a decision which forbids the people of a Territory from excluding slavery, and he does so, not because he says it is right in itself,—he does not give any opinion on that,—but because it has been *decided by the court;* and being decided by the court, he is, and you are, bound to take it in your political action as *law*, not that he judges at all of its merits, but because a decision of the court is to him

a 'Thus saith the Lord.' He places it on that ground alone; and you will bear in mind that thus committing himself unreservedly to this decision *commits him to the next one* just as firmly as to this. He did not commit himself on account of the merit or demerit of the decision, but it is a 'Thus saith the Lord.' The next decision, as much as this, will be a 'Thus saith the Lord.' There is nothing that can divert or turn him away from this decision. It is nothing that I point out to him that his great prototype, General Jackson, did not believe in the binding force of decisions. It is nothing to him that Jefferson did not so believe. I have said that I have often heard him approve of Jackson's course in disregarding the decision of the Supreme Court pronouncing a National Bank constitutional. He says, I did not hear him say so. He denies the accuracy of my recollection. I say he ought to know better than I, but I will make no question about this thing, though it still seems to me that I heard him say it twenty times. I will tell him, though, that he now claims to stand on the Cincinnati platform which affirms that Congress *cannot* charter a National Bank, in the teeth of that old standing decision that Congress *can* charter a bank. And I remind him of another piece of history on the question of respect for judicial decisions, and it is a piece of Illinois history belonging to a time when the large party to which Judge Douglas belonged were displeased with a decision of the Supreme Court of Illinois, because they had decided that a Governor could not remove a Secretary of State. You will find the whole story in Ford's History of Illinois, and I know that Judge Douglas will not deny that he was then in favor of overslaughing that decision by the mode of adding five new judges,

so as to vote down the four old ones. Not only so, but it ended in *the Judge's sitting down on that very bench as one of the five new judges to break down the four old ones.* It was in this way precisely that he got his title of judge. Now, when the Judge tells me that men appointed conditionally to sit as members of a court will have to be catechised beforehand upon some subject, I say, 'You know, Judge; you have tried it.' When he says a court of this kind will lose the confidence of all men, will be prostituted and disgraced by such a proceeding, I say, 'You know best, Judge; you have been through the mill.' But I cannot shake Judge Douglas's teeth loose from the Dred Scott decision. Like some obstinate animal (I mean no disrespect) that will hang on when he has once got his teeth fixed, you may cut off a leg, or you may tear away an arm, still he will not relax his hold. And so I may point out to the Judge, and say that he is bespattered all over, from the beginning of his political life to the present time, with attacks upon judicial decisions; I may cut off limb after limb of his public record, and strive to wrench him from a single dictum of the court,—yet I cannot divert him from it. He hangs, to the last, to the Dred Scott decision. These things show there is a purpose *strong as death and eternity* for which he adheres to this decision, and for which he will adhere to *all other decisions* of the same court."

On the fourth proposition, Mr. Lincoln said:

"What is Popular Sovereignty? Is it the right of the people to have slavery or not have it, as they see fit, in the Territories? I will state—and I have an able man to watch me—my understanding is that Popular Sovereignty, as now applied to the question of slavery, does allow the people of a Territory to have

slavery if they want to, but does not allow them *not* to have it if they *do not* want it. (Dred Scott decision) I do not mean that if this vast concourse of people were in a Territory of the United States, any one of them would be obliged to have a slave if he did not want one; but I do say that, as I understand the Dred Scott decision, if any one man wants slaves, all the rest have no way of keeping that one man from holding them."

On the fifth proposition, Mr. Lincoln said:

"When they remind us of their constitutional rights, I acknowledge them, not grudgingly, but fully and fairly; and I would give them any legislation for the reclaiming of their fugitives which, should not, in its stringency, be more likely to carry a free man into slavery, than our ordinary criminal laws are to hang an innocent one. . . . I will say here, while upon this subject, that I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so."

I submit that a careful reading of these debates will clearly and conclusively show that these positions are unanswerable, and that certainly there was nothing in anything that Douglas said, however plausible he was, that squarely attempted to answer them. It was the "cuttle fish" sort of argument.

Throughout the debate he sought to take advantage of the public state of mind in reference to its prejudices against social and marital equality for the negro. Upon this proposition Mr. Lincoln said:

"I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and black races. There is a physical difference between the two which in my

judgment will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality."

He further said:

"And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race. I say upon this occasion I do not perceive that because the white man is to have the superior position the negro should be denied everything. I do not understand that because I do not want a negro woman for a slave I must necessarily want her for a wife. My understanding is that I can just let her alone. I am now in my fiftieth year, and I certainly never have had a black woman for either a slave or a wife. So it seems to me quite possible for us to get along without making either slaves or wives of negroes."

Douglas's effort to commit Lincoln to the proposition of social and political equality between the black and white is referred to throughout the debates.

Indeed, in almost every one of the series of seven, Lincoln (the audience being a new one) feels called upon to make reply. Throughout the debates Lincoln is insistent upon giving the South her constitutional rights as to slavery with zealous and vigilant care. Nevertheless, he does insist most vigorously that slavery is inherently wrong.

Upon this proposition he says:

"We have in this nation this element of domestic slavery. It is a matter of absolute certainty that it is a disturbing element. It is the opinion of all the great men who have expressed an opinion upon it, that it is a dangerous element. We keep up a con-

troversy in regard to it. That controversy necessarily springs from difference of opinion; and if we can learn exactly—can reduce to the lowest elements—what that difference of opinion is, we perhaps shall be better prepared for discussing the different systems of policy that we would propose in regard to that disturbing element. I suggest that the difference of opinion, reduced to its lowest of terms, is no other than the difference between the men who think slavery a wrong, and those who do not think it wrong. The Republican party think it wrong; we think it is a moral, a social, and a political wrong. We think it as a wrong not confining itself merely to the persons or the States where it exists, but that it is a wrong in its tendency, to say the least, that extends itself to the existence of the whole nation. Because we think it wrong, we propose a course of policy that shall deal with it as a wrong. We deal with it as with any other wrong, in so far as we can prevent its growing any larger, and so deal with it that in the run of time there may be some promise of an end to it. We have a due regard to the actual presence of it amongst us, and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and all the constitutional obligations thrown about it. I suppose that in reference both to its actual existence in the nation, and to our constitutional obligations, we have no right at all to disturb it in the States where it exists, and we profess that we have no more inclination to disturb it than we have the right to do it. We go further than that: we don't propose to disturb it where, in one instance, we think the Constitution would permit us. We think the Constitution would permit us to disturb it in the District of Columbia. Still, we do not propose to do that, unless it should be in terms which I don't

suppose the nation is very likely soon to agree to,—the terms of making the emancipation gradual, and compensating the unwilling owners. Where we suppose we have the constitutional right, we restrain ourselves in reference to the actual existence of the institution and the difficulties thrown about it. We also oppose it as an evil so far as it seeks to spread itself. We insist on the policy that shall restrict it to its present limits. We don't suppose that in doing this we violate anything due to the actual presence of the institution, or anything due to the constitutional guaranties thrown around it. . . . He (Judge Douglas) has the high distinction, so far as I know, of never having said slavery is either right or wrong. Almost everybody else says one or the other, but the Judge never does. If there be a man in the Democratic party who thinks it is wrong, and yet clings to that party, I suggest to him, in the first place, that his leader don't talk as he does, for he never says that it is wrong. In the second place, I suggest to him that if he will examine the policy proposed to be carried forward, he will find that he carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in it. If you will examine the arguments that are made on it, you will find that every one carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in slavery."

In the last debate at Alton, October 15, 1858, Lincoln again states his position in clear and unmistakable as well as unanswerable terms:

"I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include *all* men, but they did not mean to declare all men equal *in all respects*. They did not mean to say all men were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development, or social capacity. They defined

with tolerable distinctness in what they did consider all men created equal,—equal in certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were then actually enjoying that equality, or yet that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact, they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the *right*, so that the *enforcement* of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit.

"They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society which should be familiar to all,—constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even, though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people, of all colors, everywhere."

On the question of slavery being a constant menace to the Union, Lincoln says:

"But is it true that all the difficulty and agitation we have in regard to this institution of slavery springs from office seeking, from the mere ambition of politicians? Is that the truth? How many times have we had danger from this question? Go back to the day of the Missouri Compromise. Go back to the Nullification question, at the bottom of which lay this same slavery question. Go back to the time of the Annexation of Texas. Go back to the troubles that led to the Compromise of 1850. You will find that every time, with the single exception of the Nullification question, they sprung from an endeavor to spread this institution. There never was a party in the history of this country, and there probably never will

be, of sufficient strength to disturb the general peace of the country. Parties themselves may be divided and quarrel on minor questions, yet it extends not beyond the parties themselves. But does *not* this question make a disturbance outside of political circles? Does it not enter into the churches and rend them asunder? What divided the great Methodist Church into two parts, North and South? What has raised this constant disturbance in every Presbyterian General Assembly that meets? What disturbed the Unitarian Church in this very city two years ago? What has jarred and shaken the great American Tract Society recently, not yet splitting it, but sure to divide it in the end? Is it not this same mighty, deep-seated power that somehow operates on the minds of men, exciting and stirring them up in every avenue of society,—in politics, in religion, in literature, in morals, in all the manifold relations of life? Is this the work of politicians? Is that irresistible power, which for fifty years has shaken the government and agitated the people, to be stilled and subdued by pretending that it is an exceedingly simple thing, and we ought not to talk about it? If you will get everybody else to stop talking about it, I assure you I will quit before they have half done so. But where is the philosophy or statesmanship which assumes that you can quiet that disturbing element in our society which has disturbed us for more than half a century, which has been the only serious danger that has threatened our institutions,—I say, where is the philosophy or the statesmanship based on the assumption that we are to quit talking about it, and that the public mind is all at once to cease being agitated by it? Yet this is the policy here in the North that Douglas is advocating,—that

we are to care nothing about! I ask you if it is not a false philosophy. Is it not a false statesmanship that undertakes to build up a system of policy upon the basis of caring nothing about the *very thing that everybody does care the most about?*—a thing which all experience has shown we care a very great deal about?"

. . . . . .

"On this subject of treating it as a wrong, and limiting its spread, let me say a word. Has anything ever threatened the existence of this Union save and except this very institution of slavery? What is it that we hold most dear amongst us? Our own liberty and prosperity. What has ever threatened our liberty and prosperity save and except this institution of slavery? If this is true, how do you propose to improve the condition of things by enlarging slavery,—by spreading it out and making it bigger? You may have a wen or cancer upon your person, and not be able to cut it out, lest you bleed to death; but surely it is no way to cure it, to engraft it and spread it over your whole body. That is no proper way of treating what you regard a wrong. You see this peaceful way of dealing with it as a wrong,—restricting the spread of it, and not allowing it to go into new countries where it has not already existed. That is the peaceful way, the old-fashioned way, the way in which the fathers themselves set us the example.

"He says he 'don't care whether it is voted up or voted down' in the Territories. I do not care myself, in dealing with that expression, whether it is intended to be expressive of his individual sentiments on the subject, or only of the national policy he desires to have established. It is alike valuable for my purpose. Any man can say that who does not see anything wrong

in slavery; but no man can logically say it who does see a wrong in it, because no man can logically say he don't care whether a wrong is voted up or voted down. He may say he don't care whether an indifferent thing is voted up or down, but he must logically have a choice between a right thing and a wrong thing. He contends that whatever community wants slaves has a right to have them. So they have, if it is not a wrong. But if it is a wrong, he cannot say people have a right to do wrong. He says that upon the score of equality, slaves should be allowed to go in a new Territory, like other property. This is strictly logical if there is no difference between it and other property. If it and other property are equal, his argument is entirely logical. But if you insist that one is wrong and the other right, there is no use to institute a comparison between right and wrong. You may turn over everything in the Democratic policy from beginning to end, whether in the shape it takes on the statute book, in the shape it takes in the Dred Scott decision, in the shape it takes in conversation, or the shape it takes in short maxim-like arguments,—it everywhere carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in it.

"That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, 'You work and toil and earn bread,

and I'll eat it.' No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle."

Again Lincoln exposes Douglas's doctrine of "unfriendly legislation" that the latter favored in the Freeport debate as follows:

"Although it is a right established by the Constitution of the United States to take a slave into a Territory of the United States and hold him as property, yet, unless the Territorial Legislature will give friendly legislation, and, more especially, if they adopt unfriendly legislation, they can practically exclude him. Now, without meeting this proposition as a matter of fact, I pass to consider the real constitutional obligation. Let me take the gentleman who looks me in the face before me, and let us suppose that he is a member of the Territorial Legislature. The first thing he will do will be to swear that he will support the Constitution of the United States. His neighbor by his side in the Territory has slaves and needs Territorial legislation to enable him to enjoy that constitutional right. Can he withhold the legislation which his neighbor needs for the enjoyment of a right which is fixed in his favor in the Constitution of the United States which he has sworn to support? Can he withhold it without violating his oath? And, more especially, can he pass unfriendly legislation to violate his oath? Why, this is a *monstrous* sort of talk about the Constitution of the United States! *There has never been as outlandish or lawless a doctrine from the mouth of any respectable man on earth.* I do not believe it is a constitutional

right to hold slaves in a Territory of the United States. I believe the decision was improperly made and I go for reversing it. Judge Douglas is furious against those who go for reversing a decision. But he is for legislating it out of all force while the law itself stands. I repeat that there has never been so monstrous a doctrine uttered from the mouth of a respectable man."

Lincoln most successfully exposed the fallacy of this doctrine of "squatter sovereignty," announced at Freeport, in one sentence of his great speech at Columbus, Ohio, in 1859, when he said:

"When all the trash, the words, the collateral matter, was cleared away from it, all chaff was fanned out of it, it was a pure absurdity—*no less than a thing may be lawfully driven away from where it has a lawful right to be.* Clear it of all verbiage and that is the naked truth of his proposition—that a thing may be lawfully driven from the place where it has a lawful right to stay."

It is little wonder that throughout the country wherever these debates or extracts from them had been published, that the things that were remembered because they were approved, were Lincoln's apt and able arguments demonstrating that slavery was a great evil, that "the fathers believed it in the course of ultimate extinction," and that the South, with Senator Douglas and others as allies, was now endeavoring to reverse that policy through the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, Dred Scott decision, and other means to bring about the further spread of slavery.

Greeley, in speaking of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. says:

"I cannot help regarding that senatorial contest of 1858 between Lincoln and Douglas as one of the most

characteristic and at the same time most creditable incidents in our national life. There was an honest and earnest difference with regard to a most important and imminent public question. . . . So the two champions traversed the prairies speaking alternately to the same vast audiences at several central accessible points, and speaking separately at others, until the day of the election; when Douglas secured a small majority in either branch of the legislature and was re-elected, though Lincoln had the larger popular vote. . . . Lincoln, it was said, was beaten; it was hasty erring judgment. This canvass made him stronger at home, stronger with the Republicans of the whole country, and when the next National Convention of his party assembled 18 months thereafter he became its nominee for President and thus achieved the highest station in the gift of his country, but for that misjudged defeat in 1858 he would never have attained."

These debates undoubtedly contributed more to make Abraham Lincoln a national character, capable of successful leadership in the public mind upon the dominant question of 1860, than any other achievement of his life.

What Lincoln said in these debates made him the popular antislavery leader throughout the North. What Douglas said throughout these debates, especially at Freeport, cost him his political leadership throughout the South. As Lincoln had increased in presidential size by reason of the debate, Douglas had correspondingly decreased in presidential size.

Lincoln's direct drives at the aggressions of the slave power were more than a match for Douglas's dodging. In the general public estimation Lincoln was greater in defeat than Douglas in victory.

One thing more that should not be overlooked: Horace Greeley, the great editor of the New York *Tribune,* had been a thorn in the flesh of Lincoln since 1858, when he threw the influence of the *Tribune* in favor of Douglas's re-election as United States senator.

After Lincoln's inauguration his unfriendliness seemed to develop in endeavoring to embarrass the administration upon the question of emancipation of the slave. Greeley was early and strongly in favor of that emancipation. He bitterly attacked Lincoln and the administration because it had not abolished slavery by some sweeping proclamation of emancipation. The clamor and criticism took a direct and definite form in an open letter by Horace Greeley, which was unusually severe and intemperate. It must have greatly pained the President. Lincoln did the most unusual thing of ignoring his dignity and answering the letter in these memorable words. In this letter we see again the master mind of the logician. Read and reread it:

"Hon. Horace Greeley, Dear Sir: I have just read yours of the nineteenth instant, addressed to myself through the New York *Tribune.*

"If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not now and here controvert them.

"If there be any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not now and here argue against them.

"If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

"As to the policy I 'seem to be pursuing,' as you

say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt. I would save the Union. I would save it in the shortest way under the Constitution.

"The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be—the Union as it was.

"If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them.

"If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them.

"My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery.

"If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that.

"What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save this Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union.

"I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I believe doing more will help the cause.

"I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

"I have here stated my purpose according to my views of official duty, and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

"Yours,

"A. Lincoln."

That letter must have been very embarrassing to Mr. Greeley and it no doubt suggested to him that, after all, he had underestimated the ability of this "rail-splitter" from Illinois, who not only knew how to use a maul but how to use a pen driven by a maul.

Lincoln had no place in his logic, his language, or his life for falsehood or fallacy, hypocrisy or camouflage.

CHAPTER XII

LINCOLN LANGUAGE

"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"
—Job.

WHERE did Lincoln get his language? From the Bible, Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," "Æsop's Fables," DeFoe's "Robinson Crusoe," Declaration of Independence, Blackstone, and last but not least, the dictionary that he used and studied continually. These gave him models or types of the simple, pure, and powerful English.

He followed the advice of the poet who wrote:

"And don't confound the language of the nation
With long tailed words in *osity* and *ation.*"

Lincoln's words were simple, short, and strong. They were straightforward and hence free from doubt. You always knew what he meant from what he said. His great aim was simple speech, as he himself has said:

"I could not sleep, although I tried to, when I got on such a hunt for an idea until I had caught it; and when I thought I had got it I was not satisfied until I had *repeated it over and over again until I had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend.* . . . This was a kind of passion with me."

From these books and also later from Burns and Shakespeare, he picked out the strong, striking pas-

sages and repeated them over and over again, and then he would take the sentiment and put it in simple speech, or, as he says, "in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend."

As we have seen before, this he did upon logs and bark, shingles and shovels, with a piece of charcoal, with quills and pokeberry juice on scraps of paper, and finally, when he had put his idea in plain, pointed phrase, he would copy it in his scrap-book to preserve it for future use.

Mentor Graham has well said what many of his biographers have referred to in Lincoln's study of language:

"I have known him to study for hours the best way of three to express an idea."

Just so did he study and master the English language in the preparation of all his compositions.

When I think of the average boys or girls in the modern school and college making a sort of bugbear of their work in English composition, it seems more than striking strange that the boy Lincoln, and youth Lincoln, and man Lincoln, was constantly studying and selecting words for their wealth of ideas and imagery that would give to the human mind a simple, strong concept of what he wished to convey.

His meagre materials, limited opportunities, unfavorable surroundings, would have fatally discouraged most boys, but his "passion" for these things made his pursuit of the knowledge of English a real pleasure; and if a tree is known by its fruits, then Lincoln's mastery of language is the highest evidence of his careful, constant, and conscientious study of great masterpieces of English prose and poetry.

His biographers have written as follows:

Nicolay and Hay say of him:

"Nothing would have more amazed Mr. Lincoln than to hear himself called a man of letters; but this age had produced few greater writers. Emerson ranks him with Æsop; Montalembert commends his style as a model for Princes."

Curtis says:

"He used the simplest words in the language, but they strengthened every case he stated, and no fact, or anecdote or argument ever lost force or effect from his style of presentation."

Holland says:

"He had been from a child in the habit of putting his thoughts into language. He wrote much, and to this fact is doubtless owing his clearness in statement. He could state with great exactness any fact within the range of his knowledge. His knowledge was not great, nor his vocabulary rich, but he could state the details of one by the use of the other with a precision that Daniel Webster never surpassed."

But in addition to the books that he studied and assimilated the use that he made of this knowledge, though referred to in a previous chapter, will bear repetition, for after all in study the first essential is "repetition."

Bacon has said "reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." The boy Lincoln was constantly doing all three, but seemed particularly to grasp the importance of putting his thoughts in the plainest phrase that had point and "punch" to it.

His boyhood compositions on "Temperance," "Cruelty to Animals," and the "American Government," which he wrote at an early age for his own discipline

and education, were great factors in producing the Gettysburg Address.

So likewise were his humble efforts as a boy in public speaking to the trees of the forest, to the boys and girls of the neighborhood, to the literary societies and debating clubs and lyceums, each time doing a little better than he had done the time before.

Of course when we think of Lincoln the orator we think of the Gettysburg oration, which will be found on page 221.

This two-minute oration was such a masterpiece of logic, language, politics, and patriotism, that a special chapter has been later devoted to its psychology, its unity of thought, its fundamental democracy, its elegance of expression, typical not only of those times but of the times to-day.

His language is as pure and persuasive as his logic is plain and powerful, and they are almost inseparable by any analysis of his speeches or papers.

What would serve as an illustration of the one very often performs the same service in the other.

But some things that he has said are peculiarly pertinent to picture to the mind's eye his sweet, simple speech touching the tenderer relations of our humanity. This type of speech is best illustrated by what has become known as the "Widow Bixby Letter."

"Dear Madam:

"I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle.

"I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of

mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming.

"But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

"Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

"A. LINCOLN."

The Johnston children that Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln brought into the new family when Abraham was only ten years of age mixed most agreeably with the young Lincolns. They were about the same age.

One of the boys, John Johnston, was a shiftless, ne'er-do-well sort of fellow that was constantly appealing to Lincoln in later years for assistance.

Numerous letters passed between them, indicating a very tender and intimate relation, notwithstanding Johnston's infirmities and his many importunities upon Lincoln, from time to time, for help.

Lincoln, in his own inimitable way, sends him a letter, which for kind, fatherly advice is rarely excelled.

Lincoln's human side, that was all prominent in his dealings with his fellow men, creeps out all through this letter. It is worthy of a place here to show his simple speech and his good sense and understanding of the kind of nature that he was dealing with.

The letter follows:

"DEAR JOHNSTON:

"Your request for eighty dollars I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when

I have helped you a little you have said to me, 'We can get along very well now,' but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not *lazy*, and still you are an *idler*. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; and it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit, before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

"You are in need of some ready money, and what I propose is that you shall go to work 'tooth and nail' for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of things at home, prepare for a crop, and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get—and to secure you a fair reward for your labor I now promise you that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of next May, get for your own labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now if you will do this, you will be soon out

of debt, and, what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But if I should now clear you out, next year you would be just as deep in as ever. You say you would give your place in heaven for $70 or $80. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap, for I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work.

"You say, if I will furnish you the money, you will deed me the land, and if you don't pay the money back you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been kind to me, and I do not mean to be unkind to you. On the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eight times eighty dollars to you.

"Affectionately,

"Your brother,

"A. LINCOLN."

The "Little Giant" of Illinois, with his apparent suavity and culture, might well be suspected as the author of the Bixby, or Johnston, lines, but the "Big Giant" of Illinois, with his uncouth and awkward exterior would be the last person in the State who would be presumed to have been the author of such sound sense and wholesome tender sentiment as appears in the foregoing.

For pure patriotic phrase, for a common sense of the great common heart of our humanity, this language is unsurpassed.

I want to add here the closing of the first inaugural address:

"The Chief Magistrate derives all his authority

from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this also if they choose; but the Executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present Government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

"By the frame of the Government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the Government in the short space of four years.

"My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and *well* upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you, in hot haste, to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while

the new Administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulty.

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict, without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the Government, while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect and defend it.'

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Attention is *challenged* to the last paragraph. The preparation of this inaugural address will also be dealt with later. Here, it is sufficient to say *that* paragraph is the most important and substantial change made in the inaugural address. The change was made in Washington the day before the inaugural at the suggestion of Seward and concurred in by Chase and other members of the Cabinet.

It was suggested that Mr. Lincoln's original draft was not sufficiently fraternal toward the South and

its people, and that something further should be said on this point. Mr. Lincoln requested the secretary of state, Mr. Seward, to submit a draft. Seward submitted the following:

"I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords, which, proceeding from so many battlefields and so many patriot graves, pass through all the hearts and all hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet again harmonize in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation."

A study of this original paragraph and the revision made by Lincoln is not only interesting, but instructive. It illuminates the superiority of Lincoln as a master of language far beyond that of his more scholarly and cultured secretary of state, Mr. Seward, who had been twice governor of New York, and twice elected United States senator from the Empire State, and whose defeat at Chicago gave the college men and culture of the nation a severe shock.

Lincoln's logic and language are so intertwined in one grand cable of conviction that of necessity they must be more or less treated together, and yet for simplicity and strength, statement and sweetness of sentiment nothing has surpassed his second inaugural address. Because of its brevity and beauty, it is here given in full.

"Fellow-Countrymen—At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement somewhat in detail of a

course to be pursued seemed very fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented.

"The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

"On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it; all sought to avoid it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union and divide the effect by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish; and the war came.

"One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate and extend this interest, was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war, while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

"Neither party expected for the war the magnitude

or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding.

"Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.' If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of these offences, which in the providence of God must needs come, but which having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may soon pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid with another drawn with the sword; as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the

right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

After Lincoln had made his famous Cooper Institute speech in February, 1860, which is recorded and analyzed in another chapter, he made a trip through New England.

Holland gives us some valuable suggestions as to his reception by the people of New England as follows:

"Some very interesting reminiscences of this trip were communicated to the public in 1864, by Rev. John P. Gulliver of Norwich, who listened to his address in that city. On the morning following the speech, he met Mr. Lincoln upon a train of cars, and entered into conversation with him. In speaking of his speech, Mr. Gulliver remarked to Mr. Lincoln that he thought it the most remarkable one he ever heard. 'Are you sincere in what you say?' inquired Mr. Lincoln. 'I mean every word of it,' replied the minister. 'Indeed, sir,' he continued, 'I learned more of the art of public speaking last evening than I could from a whole course of lectures on rhetoric.' Then Mr. Lincoln informed him of 'a most extraordinary circumstance' that occurred at New Haven a few days previously. A professor of rhetoric in Yale College, he had been told, came to hear him, took notes of his speech, and gave a lecture on it to his class the following day; and, not satisfied with that, followed him to Meriden the next evening and heard him again for the same purpose. All this seemed to Mr. Lincoln to be 'very extraordinary.' He had been sufficiently astonished by his

success at the West, but he had no expectation of any marked success at the East, particularly among literary and learned men. 'Now,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'I should like very much to know what it was in my speech which you thought so remarkable, and which interested my friend the professor so much?' Mr. Gulliver's answer was: 'The clearness of your statements, the unanswerable style of your reasoning, and, especially, your illustrations, which were romance and pathos and fun and logic all welded together.'

'After Mr. Gulliver had fully satisfied his curiosity by a further exposition of the politician's peculiar power, Mr. Lincoln said, 'I am much obliged to you for this. I have been wishing for a long time to find some one who would make this analysis for me. It throws light on a subject which has been dark to me. I can understand very readily how such a power as you have ascribed to me will account for the effect which seems to be produced by my speeches. I hope you have not been too flattering in your estimate. Certainly I have had a most wonderful success for a man of my limited education.' "

I want to add one more letter of the many that might with almost equal propriety be included in this chapter, which reveals in a most intimate and peculiarly human way, the great heart of this great President;—his letter to General Hooker upon his appointment in command of the Army of the Potomac in the place of General Burnside, who had been relieved after the battle of Fredericksburg:

"General: I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some

things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skillful soldier, which of course I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable if not indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country, and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticising their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it; and now beware of rashness. Beware of rashness, and give us victories. Yours very truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

We are told of the effect on Hooker in these words: "He finished reading it, almost with tears in his eyes; and as he folded it and put it back in the breast

of his coat, he said, 'That is just such a letter as a father might write to a son. It is a beautiful letter, and although I think he was harder on me than I deserved, I will say that I love the man who wrote it.' "

What was it about his speech that gave it such persuasive power and such political permanence? This concrete man was always thinking about concrete things, as to their concrete properties, and as to concrete persons with their concrete rights. He did not deal with metaphysical abstractions nor with the beauties of transcendentalism. He had lived the varied life of a common humanity, from its lowest depths to its loftiest heights. He knew human poverty and privation, human suffering and service, and when his country called, as Cincinnatus left the plough, so he left the law office to which he had been jealously wedded for some years, and espoused humanity's cause for liberty, entire liberty, eternal liberty, the liberty of all men everywhere.

His oratory was not the oratory of expediency, or opportunism; it was the oratory of the eternal reason and right of things. What he said more than a half-century ago was entirely and eternally reasonable and right when he said it, and therefore it is entirely and eternally reasonable and right to-day.

He was the universal representative man—humanity's man, unbounded by time or territory, service or station.

Nature has endowed many orators with some wonderful prepossession, such as an attractive physique, a rich voice, or exceptional dramatic power. He had none of these. He was awkward, ungainly, and had a squeaky, falsetto voice. These disadvantages, however, were more than compensated by the humanities

of his head and heart, put in such plain premises, link on link, in such simple, sincere speech that it was like one human heart speaking to a multitude of human hearts in their own language and life.

When we remember how much of controversy in this old world of ours arises out of uncertain, indefinite, double-meaning words, not unfrequently resulting in bitterness and jealousy in our community life, when we remember how much of litigation, from the lowest to the highest courts of the land, arises out of uncertain, inappropriate, ambiguous words and phrases in our constitutions, our statutes, our contracts, the importance of the Lincoln model for written or spoken speech should be most obvious to all of us.

No other man of his own time has demonstrated himself to be such an accurate and reliable interpreter of human nature and human needs as this Man of Illinois.

CHAPTER XIII

LINCOLN ON GOVERNMENT

LINCOLN thought in the terms of democracy; spoke its speech; lived its life; and died triumphant in its defense.

Lincoln was his own pedagogue and pupil in government. He not only studied the trunk and the limbs, but the root and all its branches. His like has not yet been recorded in biography for thoroughness and efficiency in research and study of foundation facts and first principles.

I remember a sentence in one of my old text-books which reads:

"I know a lot of things, but nothing thoroughly; I remember a mass of things but nothing distinctly."

How this sentence applies to many of us!

What Lincoln knew he knew "thoroughly." What he remembered, he remembered "distinctly," and he knew and remembered vitally enough so that he could use and did use that knowledge in a practical way.

The Bible gave him the ethical side of government, the Declaration of Independence, Constitution of the United States, Constitution of the State of Indiana, the Ordinance of 1787, as contained in Turnham's now famous volume of Revised Statutes of Indiana, gave him the political side of government.

Doubtless, also he learned much from some history of the United States which early came into his pos-

session, and also Weems's "Life of Washington," together with other biographies and histories.

His intelligent and enthusiastic interest in the subject of government cropped out at a very early age, considering his handicaps. Several of his reliable biographers say that when he was but seventeen years of age he wrote a composition on the "American Government," giving particular attention to "the necessity of preserving the Constitution and perpetuating the Union."

It is almost prophetic, weirdly so, that this boy at seventeen should be writing an essay on "perpetuating the Union," when thirty-five years later he was to be the great central figure in the conduct of the Civil War for the purpose of "perpetuating the Union."

Lincoln's life, as boy and youth, is a splendid illustration of the old doctrine of evolution announced in Holy Writ, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

His studies and views continued their development until we have a masterpiece in the address he delivered before the Lyceum of Springfield in January, 1837.

It reads, as many of Lincoln's addresses read, as if they were made not for *then*, but for *now*. At that time he was twenty-eight years of age. His English style was not quite as simple, or as smooth as it was in later years, but it had all the Lincoln essentials in it, his simple statement of a given situation, his demonstration of its being wrong or right, and his suggestion and demonstration of the remedy. His clear declaration against mobs and riots and other lawlessness are matters of intense interest to the American public to-day.

The "Mob" of 1837 seems quite the same as the

"Mob" of 1917. The passing of eighty years has not changed human nature nor the danger of lawlessness to our institutions.

Among other things he said:

"I hope I am not over wary; but if I am not there is even now something of ill omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country—the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts, and the worse than savage mobs for the executive ministers of justice. This disposition is awfully fearful in any community; and that it now exists in ours, though grating to our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of truth and an insult to our intelligence to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs form the every-day news of the times. They have pervaded the country from New England to Louisiana; they are neither peculiar to the eternal snows of the former nor the burning suns of the latter; they are not the creature of climate, neither are they confined to the slaveholding or the non-slaveholding States. Alike they spring up among the pleasure-hunting masters of Southern slaves, and the order-loving citizens of the land of steady habits. Whatever then their cause may be, it is common to the whole country.

"It would be tedious as well as useless to recount the horrors of all of them. Those happening in the State of Mississippi and at St. Louis are perhaps the most dangerous in example and revolting to humanity. In the Mississippi case they first commenced by hanging the regular gamblers—a set of men certainly not following for a livelihood a very useful or very honest occupation, but one which, so far from being forbidden by the laws, was actually licensed by an act of the

Legislature passed but a single year before. Next, negroes suspected of conspiring to raise an insurrection were caught up and hanged in all parts of the State; then, white men supposed to be leagued with the negroes; and finally, strangers from neighboring states, going thither on business, were in many instances subjected to the same fate. Thus went on this process of hanging, from gamblers to negroes, from negroes to white citizens, and from these to strangers, till dead men were seen literally dangling from the boughs of trees upon every roadside, and in numbers almost sufficient to rival the native Spanish moss of the country as a drapery of the forest.

"Turn, then, to that horror-striking scene at St. Louis. A single victim only was sacrificed there. This story is very short, and is perhaps the most highly tragic of anything of its length that has ever been witnessed in real life. A mulatto man by the name of McIntosh was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a tree, and actually burned to death; and all within a single hour from the time he had been a freeman attending to his own business and at peace with the world.

"Such are the effects of mob law, and such are the scenes becoming more and more frequent in this land so lately famed for love of law and order, and the stories of which have even now grown too familiar to attract anything more than an idle remark.

"But you are perhaps ready to ask, 'What has this to do with the perpetuation of our political institutions?' I answer, 'It has much to do with it.' Its direct consequences are, comparatively speaking, but a small evil, and much of its danger consists in the proneness of our minds to regard its direct as its only con-

sequences. Abstractly considered, the hanging of the gamblers at Vicksburg was of but little consequence. They constitute a portion of population that is worse than useless in any community; and their death, if no pernicious example be set by it, is never matter of reasonable regret with any one. If they were annually swept from the stage of existence by the plague of smallpox, honest men would perhaps be much profited by the operation. Similar, too, is the correct reasoning in regard to the burning of the negro at St. Louis. He had forfeited his life by the perpetration of an outrageous murder upon one of the most worthy and respectable citizens of the city, and had he not died as he did, he must have died by the sentence of the law in a very short time afterward. As to him alone, it was as well the way it was as it could otherwise have been. But the example in either case was fearful. When men take it in their heads to-day to hang gamblers or burn murderers, they should recollect that in the confusion usually attending such transactions they will be as likely to hang or burn some one who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is, and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of to-morrow may, and probably will, hang or burn some of them by the very same mistake. And not only so; the innocent, those who have ever set their faces against violations of law in every shape, alike with the guilty fall victims to the ravages of mob law; and thus it goes up, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals are trodden down and disregarded. But all this, even, is not the full extent of the evil. By such examples, by instances of the perpetrators of such acts going unpunished, the lawless in spirit are encouraged to be-

come lawless in practice; and having been used to no restraint but dread of punishment, they thus become absolutely unrestrained. Having ever regarded government as their deadliest bane, they make a jubilee of the suspension of its operations, and pray for nothing so much as its total annihilation. While, on the other hand, good men, men who love tranquillity, who desire to abide by the laws and enjoy their benefits, who would gladly spill their blood in the defense of their country, seeing their property destroyed, their families insulted, and their lives endangered, their persons injured, and seeing nothing in prospect that forebodes a change for the better, become tired of and disgusted with a government that offers them no protection, and are not much averse to a change in which they imagine they have nothing to lose. Thus, then, by the operation of this mobocratic spirit which all must admit is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed—I mean the attachment of the people. Whenever this effect shall be produced among us; whenever the vicious portion of population shall be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, and burn churches, ravage and rob provision-stores, throw printing-presses into rivers, shoot editors, and hang and burn obnoxious persons at pleasure and with impunity, depend on it, this government cannot last. By such things the feelings of the best citizens will become more or less alienated from it, and thus it will be left without friends, or with too few, and those few too weak to make their friendship effectual. At such a time, and under such circumstances, men of sufficient talent, and ambition will not be wanting to seize the oppor-

tunity, strike the blow, and overturn that fair fabric which for the last half century has been the fondest hope of the lovers of freedom throughout the world.

"I know the American people are much attached to their government; I know they would suffer much for its sake; I know they would endure evils long and patiently before they would ever think of exchanging it for another—yet, notwithstanding all this, if the laws be continually despised and disregarded, if their rights to be secure in their persons and property are held by no better tenure than the caprice of a mob, the alienation of their affections from the government is the natural consequence; and to that, sooner or later, it must come.

"Here, then is one point at which danger may be expected.

"The question recurs, 'How shall we fortify against it?' The answer is simple. Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling-books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and

enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation; and let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay of all sexes and tongues and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars.

"While ever a state of feeling such as this shall universally or even very generally prevail throughout the nation, vain will be every effort, and fruitless every attempt, to subvert our national freedom.

"When I so pressingly urge a strict observance of all the laws, let me not be understood as saying there are no bad laws, or that grievances may not arise for the redress of which no legal provisions have been made. I mean to say no such thing. But I do mean to say that although bad laws, if they exist, should be repealed as soon as possible, still, while they continue in force, for the sake of example they should be religiously observed. So also in unprovided cases. If such arise, let proper legal provisions be made for them with the least possible delay, but till then let them, if not too intolerable, be borne with.

"There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law. In any case that may arise, as, for instance, the promulgation of abolitionism, one of two positions is necessarily true—that is, the thing is right within itself, and therefore deserves the protection of all law and all good citizens, or it is wrong, and therefore proper to be prohibited by legal enactments; and in neither case is the interposition of mob law either necessary, justifiable, or excusable.

. . . . . .

"But those histories (scenes of American Revolution) are gone. They can be read no more forever. They were a fortress of strength; but what invading foeman

could never do, the silent artillery of time has done—the levelling of its walls. They are gone. They were a forest of giant oaks; but the all-resistless hurricane has swept over them, and left only here and there a lonely trunk, despoiled of its verdure, shorn of its foliage, unshading and unshaded, to murmur in a few more gentle breezes, and to combat with its mutilated limbs a few more ruder storms, then to sink and be no more.

"They were pillars of the temple of liberty; and now that they have crumbled away that temple must fall unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the solid quarry of sober reason. Passion has helped us, but can do so no more. It will in future be our enemy. Reason—cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason—must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense. Let those materials be molded into general intelligence, sound morality, and, in particular, a reverence for the Constitution and laws; and that we improved to the last, that we remained free to the last, that we revered his name to the last, that during his long sleep we permitted no hostile foot to pass over or desecrate his resting-place, shall be that which to learn the last trump shall awaken our Washington.

"Upon these let the proud fabric of freedom rest, as the rock of its basis; and as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

We have seen this prophet at seventeen writing about "the necessity of preserving our Constitution and perpetuating the Union"; at twenty-eight we hear him speaking on:

"Whenever the vicious portion of population shall

be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, and burn churches, ravage and rob provision-stores, throw printing-presses into rivers, shoot editors, and hang and burn obnoxious persons at pleasure and with impunity, depend on it, this government cannot last."

Again he says:

"'How shall we fortify against it?' The answer is simple. Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling-books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice."

Again he says:

"There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law."

These political proverbs, primary principles of efficient government, are as applicable to-day as they were in 1837, when Lincoln uttered them.

This speech may serve as a model for young America in the preparation of a composition or oration upon

law and order, a subject of unusual interest and importance in this twentieth century, and at no time more than to-day.

Without law and order all nature must return to chaos and all government to anarchy. There is no alternative.

We need more of leadership to-day along these Lincoln lines of law and order; more of the accomplishment of needful change in our social and industrial life, but through the regular and orderly constitutional or statutory channels.

The deserved dissolution and death of the Whig party in the early fifties provided the occasion and necessity for the organization of the new Republican party.

In this political organization there were sundry and divers elements, varying from those that were exceedingly conservative to those that were extremely radical.

Abolitionism, as it was then known, and with which Herndon, Lincoln's partner, was more or less identified, was reaching out to control the new party. Herndon himself says:

"We recommended the employment of any means, however desperate, to promote and defend the cause of freedom. At one of these meetings Lincoln was called on for a speech. He responded to the request, counselling moderation and less bitterness in dealing with the situation before us. We were belligerent in tone, and clearly out of patience with the Government. Lincoln opposed the notion of coercive measures with the possibility of resulting bloodshed, advising us to eschew resort to the bullet. 'You can better succeed,' he declared, 'with the ballot. You can peaceably then redeem the Government and preserve the liberties of

mankind through your votes and voice and moral influence. . . . Let there be peace. Revolutionize through the ballot box, and restore the Government once more to the affections and hearts of men by making it express, as it was intended to do, the highest spirit of justice and liberty. Your attempt, if there be such, to resist the laws of Kansas by force is criminal and wicked; and all your feeble attempts will be follies and end in bringing sorrow on your heads and ruin the cause you would freely die to preserve!'"

A sentiment more sound and salutary in the social, industrial, and political councils of the nation to-day could scarcely be found.

The violent outbreaks in that day, 1855, were not unlike those that we find to-day in the unrest, disorder, and violence through I. W. W., the use of bomb and dynamite in labor strikes, and the picketing of the White House by overzealous suffragists.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of the training and discipline afforded Lincoln by his service in the legislature of Illinois for four terms, his service as a lawyer at a most active and able bar for twenty-four years, his service in Congress for one term, all the while giving special study from the point of personal predilection to the subject of government, as a case of first impression and as a study in original philosophy. His great speeches teem with the basic principles of constitutional government as declared in the handiwork of Thomas Jefferson, the Declaration of Independence.

To most of us government is a sort of vague abstraction. We lack definite ideas and clearness of conception as to just what government is. I think of it as the old grist-mill along the little river. As it took

power to run that mill, so it takes power to run government. It matters not whether the power be water power, electric power, or what-not, it still takes power to run the mill and grind the grist.

So in government. It may be government by "consent of the governed," it may be government by a kaiser, king, or sultan, it may be government by oligarchy or aristocracy of wealth, or royalty; but with us here, as sons and daughters of Uncle Sam, it is all boiled down to the proposition that "all political power is inherent in the people," and that the power of the American government is first, last, and all the time in the hands, heads, and hearts of our American citizens.

We believe that the aggregate judgment of all the people is better than the individual judgment of any one of the people.

Now, this people's power furnishes the water or electricity, steam, or what-not to run the government machinery and operates upon the departments, the officers, and the general routine, all for what purpose? In short, what, after all, are the purposes of government.

The constitutional fathers in 1787 made some generalizations upon this subject in the preamble of the Constitution, which, however, has been held by the Supreme Court of the United States not to be any part of that document.

The preamble reads:

"We, the people, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do establish and ordain this constitution for the United States of America."

"Glittering generalities" are too frequently only an-

other name for political "phantasmagoria." They vaguely cover such a vast field that in particular they cover nothing.

Abraham Lincoln, in his own simple, strong speech, puts the purposes of our government into the following language:

"This is essentially a people's contest. . . . It is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from the shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life. Yielding to partisan and temporary departure from necessity, this, after all, is the leading object of the government for whose existence we contend."

In my judgment this is the biggest and best conception of American democracy ever put into the English language, and it took the biggest and best democratic American of his own time or any other to put these paramount purposes in such plain, practical phrase.

"To elevate the condition of men."

"To lift artificial weights from the shoulders."

"To clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all."

"To afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."

These four phrases spell humanity, and Lincoln forever makes them the definition of our American democracy.

In a word it means that with Lincoln, democracy was synonymous with humanity. He thought, he talked, he labored, and lived,—yes, he died, as the one, composite, universal, representative man.

These words of Lincoln should be written in every public forum, in every school and college in the land. They should be familiar at every fireside and their substance and spirit should inspire and guide every public officer in the discharge of his public duties.

In some strange way these immortal basic thoughts of Lincoln have been much overlooked. Of all his great sayings which future generations will treasure, at every human hearthstone and every forum for freedom, these words, part of his official message to the Congress of the United States, will stand out among the most immortal of all his immortality.

Lincoln always had an abiding faith in the general judgment of the common people. He once said:

"Our government rests on public opinion. Whoever can change public opinion can change the government practically just so much."

In the first Lincoln-Douglas debate at Ottawa Lincoln said:

"In this and like communities, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who moulds public sentiment, goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed."

In his first inaugural address he used this language:

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? . . . By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief, and have with equal wisdom provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very

short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years."

CHAPTER XIV

LINCOLN ON SLAVERY

Much has been spoken and still more written as to Mr. Lincoln's position on slavery from the time of his boyhood to the day of his martyrdom.

A review of what Lincoln himself has said on the matter, what Lincoln himself has done, and why he did it, would seem relevant here.

Some of his biographers have earnestly attempted to give his childhood mind a bent against slavery due to parental inheritance, especially through the father, Thomas Lincoln.

These biographers assign hatred of slavery as a reason for Thomas Lincoln's removal from the slave soil of Kentucky to the free soil of Indiana.

Notwithstanding this highly creditable theory, it is wholly unsupported by fact. He moved, as many another man moved, because it looked better on the other side of the fence, in the next county, in the next State.

It is altogether unlikely that any hatred of slavery in Kentucky would be silenced by the free soil of Indiana and Illinois, and we hear nothing of Thomas Lincoln either favorably for freedom or for his rising son during all his political and legal contests.

The first contact Lincoln had with slavery in the concrete, as agreed by a number of his more reliable biographers, was on a trip he made to New Orleans for Denton Offut.

John Hanks, his cousin, and John Johnston, his

stepbrother, with Lincoln, constructed a boat and launched it within four weeks, for a trip down the Mississippi. After disposing of Offut's cargo at New Orleans they viewed the sights of the Crescent City, and Lincoln for the first time saw "negroes in chains—whipped and scourged."

The following account is given by Herndon in his life of Lincoln:

"One morning in their rambles over the city the trio passed a slave auction. A vigorous and comely mulatto girl was being sold. She underwent a thorough examination at the hands of the bidders; they pinched her flesh and made her trot up and down the room like a horse, to show how she moved, and in order, as the auctioneer said, that 'bidders might satisfy themselves' whether the article they were offering to buy was sound or not. The whole thing was so revolting that Lincoln moved away from the scene with a deep feeling of 'unconquerable hate.' Bidding his companions follow him he said, 'By God, boys, let's get away from this. If ever I get a chance to hit that thing (meaning slavery), I'll hit it hard.'"

Herndon relates, the incident was given to him in 1865 by John Hanks. Herndon also relates that he himself had heard Lincoln refer to the same incident himself. This is confirmed by several other biographers. At this time Lincoln was twenty-two years of age.

The next time slavery was brought to his attention was when he was a member of the State Legislature at Springfield, six years after his visit to New Orleans. The abolitionist had taken his westward way, and New England seed had settled in the soil of Illinois. The majority of the State Legislature, however, greatly

deprecated the agitation against slavery, and as expressing such deprecation the following resolution was passed:

"*Resolved* by the General Assembly of the State of Illinois: That we highly disapprove of the formation of Abolition societies and of the doctrines promulgated by them,

"That the right of property in slaves is sacred to the slave-holding States by the Federal Constitution, and that they cannot be deprived of that right without their consent,

"That the General Government cannot abolish slavery in the District of Columbia against the consent of the citizens of said District, without a manifest breach of good faith,

"That the Governor be requested to transmit to the States of Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, New York, and Connecticut, a copy of the foregoing report and resolutions."

Thereafter, Lincoln endeavored to marshal the minority in support of a resolution of protest against these pro-slavery resolutions. He was unable to find any one save Dan Stone to join him in presenting the minority resolutions.

Lincoln's protest read as follows:

"Resolutions upon the subject of domestic slavery having passed both branches of the General Assembly at its present session, the undersigned hereby protest against the passage of the same.

"They believe that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy, but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than abate its evils.

"They believe that the Congress of the United States has no power under the Constitution to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different States.

"They believe that the Congress of the United States has the power under the Constitution to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, but that the power ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of the District.

"The difference between these opinions and those contained in the above resolutions is their reason for entering this protest.

"DAN STONE,
"A. LINCOLN,
"Representatives from the county of Sangamon."

Holland speaks of Mr. Lincoln's record on the slavery question, while a member of Congress, as follows:

"Mr. Lincoln carried into this session the anti-slavery record of an anti-slavery whig. He had voted forty-two times for the Wilmot Proviso, had stood firmly by John Quincy Adams and Joshua R. Giddings on the right of petition, and was recognized as a man who would do as much in opposition to slavery as his constitutional obligations would permit him to do."

It will be remembered that Lincoln himself had introduced the "Spot Resolutions," quoted in a previous chapter, and also had made a speech upon the "unconstitutional and unjustifiable" commencement of the Mexican War, which he believed to be simply an attempt for the further extension of slavery. But Lincoln had, as a congressman, taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States.

To a man of Lincoln's high sense of honor and his

conception of a conscientious constitutional duty, the taking of this oath was not a light or trifling thing, and in his recognition of this obligation he felt it his duty to protect the slaveholder in his constitutional rights, as well as the non-slaveholder in his constitutional rights.

While engaged in the practice of law, he not unfrequently was retained by the slave-owner to prosecute or defend an action in which the right of property in a slave was involved. A noted case was that in which he was employed by General Madison, of Bourbon County, Kentucky, who had brought five or six negroes into Coles County, Illinois, and worked them on a farm for two or three years.

He presented simply the legal side of the case without sentiment or enthusiasm. The Supreme Court decided against him, but Lincoln believed that under the Constitution and the acts of Congress the slaveholder had an undoubted right to be protected as to his property in the slave.

In his speech in Chicago, delivered July 10, 1858, Mr. Lincoln said:

"I have said a hundred times, and I have now no inclination to take it back, that I believe there is no right, and ought to be no inclination, in the people of the Free States to enter into the Slave States, and interfere with the question of slavery at all."

Further on in that speech he says:

"While we agree that, by the Constitution we assented to, in the States where it exists, we have no right to interfere with it, because it is in the Constitution; and we are by both duty and inclination to stick by that Constitution, in all its letter and spirit, from beginning to end."

It was in this speech that he made apt answer to the charge made against him by Douglas that he favored an entire equality between black and white, as follows:

"I protest, now and forever, against that counterfeit logic which presumes that because I did not want a negro woman for a slave, I do necessarily want her for a wife. My understanding is that I need not have her for either, but, as God made us separate, we can leave one another alone, and do one another much good thereby."

In his first debate with Douglas at Ottawa, he quotes from his Peoria speech delivered four years before:

"I think, and shall try to show that it (the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the enactment of the Kansas and Nebraska Bill) is wrong,—wrong in its direct effect, letting slavery into Kansas and Nebraska, and wrong in its prospective principle, allowing it to spread to every other part of the wide world where men can be found inclined to take it.

"This declared indifference, but, as I must think, covert real zeal for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world,—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites; causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty,—criticising the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest. . . .

"When they [the slaveholders] remind us of their

constitutional rights, I acknowledge them, not grudgingly, but fully and fairly; and I would give them any legislation for the reclaiming of their fugitives which should not, in its stringency, be more likely to carry a free man into slavery, than our ordinary criminal laws are to hang an innocent one."

This doctrine was expressed by him again and again in a number of speeches before the debates and throughout the debates.

I know some will be surprised at Lincoln's position at this time, but I am quite sure that in the painting of this political portrait of him he would answer, much as Cromwell did to the great artist who was painting his picture in oil. The artist suggested the elimination of a wart on the great Cromwell's face. "No," said Cromwell, "paint me as I am."

In view of his position on the fugitive slave law Wendell Phillips often referred to Lincoln as the "Slave Hound of Illinois," and was much opposed to his nomination for the presidency of the United States.

Mr. Lincoln, after his election as President, stopped at Cincinnati on his way to Washington. In the Queen City he made a short speech in which he said, among other things:

"You [Kentuckians] will want to know what we will do with you. We mean to treat you as near as we possibly can as Washington, Jefferson and Madison treated you. We mean to leave you alone and in no way to interfere with your institutions, to abide by all and every compromise of the Constitution."

In the first inaugural address, March 4, 1861, Lincoln said:

"I do but quote from one of those speeches, when I declare that 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states

where it exists.' I believe I have no lawful right to do so; and I have no inclination to do so. Those who nominated and elected me did so with the full knowledge that I had made this, and made many similar declarations, and had never recanted them."

And then he quotes one of the planks of the Republican National platform as follows:

"Resolved, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the states, and especially the right of each state to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend. . . ."

Lincoln further said:

"There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

"'No person held to service or labor in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.'"

Commenting on this provision of the Constitution, Lincoln said in that same inaugural address:

"It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the lawgiver is the law.

"All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution—to this provision as well as any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause 'shall be delivered up,' their oaths are unanimous."

Shortly after the opening of the great Civil War the agitation began in various quarters of the republic to emancipate the slaves.

General Fremont's attitude upon this question in Missouri and General Hunter's in the South had very greatly embarrassed the President, and their orders of partial emancipation had to be reversed, which caused a fresh outbreak for emancipation in many sections of the country.

Delegation after delegation called on the President urging emancipation. It is a well-known fact that Lincoln was all the while in favor of a gradual emancipation with compensation. Congress, however, and the South, also, was against his plan, and still the abolition sentiment grew.

It will be remembered that Horace Greeley, who for some years had been a thorn in the flesh of Mr. Lincoln, finally came out in an article in the New York *Tribune*, then probably the most largely circulated and most influential newspaper in the United States, in which he very severely criticised, and even castigated, President Lincoln for his failure to act summarily in the emancipation of the slave.

In the summer of 1862 Mr. Lincoln made the first draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, and that without consulting his Cabinet.

It is worthy of suggestion here that that draft had been made before the letter to Greeley.

About the 1st of August the Proclamation was submitted to a Cabinet meeting. It is needless to say that members of the Cabinet were much surprised.

Holland, relates the circumstances as follows:

"Mr. Lincoln had before him a document which he knew was to perpetuate his name to all futurity,—

a document which involved the liberty of four millions of human beings then living, and of untold millions then unborn,—which changed the policy of the government and the course and character of the war,—which revolutionized the social institutions of more than a third of the nation,—which brought all the governments of Christendom into new relations to the rebellion, and which involved Mr. Lincoln's recognition of the will of the Divine Ruler of the universe. It was the supreme moment of his life."

Numerous suggestions by way of changes were made, some as to one thing, and some as to another. Finally Seward said:

"Mr. President, I approve of the proclamation, but I question the expediency of its issue at this juncture. The depression of the public mind consequent upon our repeated reverses is so great that I fear the effect of so important a step. It may be viewed as the last measure of an exhausted government—a cry for help—the government stretching forth its hands to Ethiopia, instead of Ethiopia stretching forth her hands to the government—our last shriek on the retreat."

Finally it was agreed, upon the suggestion of Seward, that the matter go over until a more favorable situation as to the nation's prospect of victory.

Then came the battle of Antietam, and while not a decisive victory, it was regarded as a repulse to the South. Lincoln immediately made his second draft, called a meeting of the Cabinet, and finally said to his confidential official family in a low and reverent tone: "I have promised my God that I will do it."

Chase thereupon said:

"Did I understand you correctly, Mr. President?"

Lincoln replied:

"I made a solemn vow before God that, if General Lee should be driven back from Pennsylvania, I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves."

This Emancipation Proclamation is surely worthy of a place among these pages:

"I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States of America, and Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relation between the United States and each of the states, and the people thereof, in which states that relation is or may be suspended or disturbed.

"That it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress, to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all slave states so-called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which states may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, immediate or gradual abolishment of slavery within their respective limits; and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent, with their consent, upon this continent or elsewhere, with the previously obtained consent of the governments existing there, will be continued.

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any state, or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then

be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the states and parts of states, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any state, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States, by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such state shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such state, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States.

"That attention is hereby called to an act of Congress entitled 'An Act to make an additional Article of War,' approved March 13th, 1862, and which act is in the words and figures following:

"'Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That hereafter the following shall be promulgated as an additional article of war for the government of the army of the United States, and shall be obeyed and observed as such:

" 'ARTICLE—All officers or persons in the military or naval service of the United States are prohibited from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives

from service or labor who may have escaped from any persons to whom such service or labor is claimed to be due, and any officer who shall be found guilty by a court-martial of violating this article shall be dismissed from the service.'

" 'Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That this act shall take effect from and after its passage.'

"Also, to the ninth and tenth sections of an act entitled 'An Act to suppress Insurrection, to punish Treason and Rebellion, to seize and confiscate Property of Rebels, and for other purposes,' approved July 16th, 1862, and which sections are in the words and figures following:

" 'Sec. 9. And be it further enacted, That all slaves of persons who shall hereafter be engaged in rebellion against the government of the United States, or who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto, escaping from such persons and taking refuge within the lines of the army; and all slaves captured from such persons, or deserted by them, and coming under the control of the government of the United States; and all slaves of such persons found on (or) being within any place occupied by rebel forces and afterwards occupied by forces of the United States, shall be deemed captives of war, and shall be forever free of their servitude, and not again held as slaves.

" 'Sec. 10. And be it further enacted, That no slave escaping into any state, territory, or the District of Columbia, from any other state, shall be delivered up, or in any way impeded or hindered of his liberty, except for crime, or some offense against the laws, unless the person claiming said fugitive shall first make oath that the person to whom the labor or service of such fugitive is alleged to be due is his law-

ful owner, and has not borne arms against the United States in the present rebellion, nor in any way given aid and comfort thereto; and no person engaged in the military or naval service of the United States shall, under any pretense whatever, assume to decide on the validity of the claim of any person to the service or labor of any other person, or surrender up any such person to the claimant, on pain of being dismissed from the service.' "

"And I do hereby enjoin upon and order all persons engaged in the military and naval service of the United States to observe, obey, and enforce, within their respective spheres of service, the act and sections above recited.

"And the Executive will in due time recommend that all citizens of the United States who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall (upon the restoration of the constitutional relation between the United States and their respective states and people, if that relation shall have been suspended or disturbed) be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States, including the loss of slaves.

"In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

"Done at the city of Washington, this tenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand
(L. S.) eight hundred and sixty-two, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"By the President:
"WM. H. SEWARD, Secretary of State."

Subsequent to this date, in April, 1864, Lincoln in a personal letter to Mr. Hodges of Frankfort, Kentucky,

gave his course of reasoning preliminary to the Emancipation Proclamation, as follows:

"I did understand, however, that very oath to preserve the Constitution to the best of my ability, imposed upon me the duty of preserving, by every indispensable means, that government—that nation of which that Constitution was the organic law. Was it possible to lose the nation and yet preserve the Constitution? By general law, life and limb must be protected; yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life, but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures, otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution through the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong, I assumed this ground, and now avow it. I could not feel that, to the best of my ability, I had even tried to preserve the Constitution, if, to preserve slavery, or any minor matter, I should permit the wreck of government, country, and Constitution altogether. When, early in the war, General Fremont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When, a little later, General Cameron, then Secretary of War, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected, because I did not yet think it an indispensable necessity. When still later General Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable necessity had come. When, in March and May and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the border states to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come, unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition; and I

was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter."

A few days after the Proclamation was issued a large delegation appeared at the White House, and the President was called upon for a short address. In reference to the Proclamation, he said:

"What I did, I did after a very full deliberation, and under a heavy and solemn sense of responsibility. I can only trust in God I have made no mistake."

Two years thereafter he said:

"As affairs have turned, it is the central act of my administration, and the great event of the nineteenth century."

The final and formal act of Emancipation did not take place until the 1st of January, 1863. One paragraph of that is so concisely explanatory of the whole Proclamation that it should be quoted:

"And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

After Lincoln's re-election in November, 1864, he took up for the second time the matter of a new amendment to the Federal Constitution to abolish slavery throughout the nation.

He always felt that his own Emancipation Proclamation was largely a military measure and that a number of very serious and perplexing questions might arise under it. Therefore, in order to save all these and guarantee forever to the black man his new freedom, Lincoln urged upon Congress the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment in its present form to be submitted

to the States of the Union for their adoption. This amendment finally passed Congress the last of January, 1865. It was the crowning work of the Lincoln Emancipation.

CHAPTER XV

LINCOLN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

If America had done nothing else than to give the world two such apostles of democracy as Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, she would have immortalized herself for all coming ages.

As Jefferson was the most distinguished author of the Declaration of Independence, so Lincoln has proven its most distinguished interpreter.

So far as political discussion in the press and public forum was concerned, the Declaration of Independence had very largely gone into eclipse after the surrender of Yorktown in 1781. The men who framed the Declaration of Independence did not frame the Constitution of the United States. There was not a single line of the former in the latter. Save here and there a solitary voice crying in the wilderness, that Declaration of Independence and its immortal principles of personal and political liberty was nothing but a memory.

Indeed, in a large section of the country to refer to it was, to say the least, *lese-majesté*, and it remained the practical, patriotic task of Lincoln to resurrect the principles of the Declaration of Independence and to challenge the advancing hosts of slavery to the doctrines of Jefferson as announced and adopted in that Declaration.

What Aristotle was to his great teacher, Plato, Lincoln was to his great teacher, Jefferson, and it may be

observed here, for it is an historical fact, that Abraham Lincoln has quoted Jefferson more favorably and frequently than he has quoted all other American statesmen combined.

It would be impossible, as it would be inadvisable, to give all the references Lincoln has made to the doctrines of Jefferson in or out of the Declaration of Independence. But a few references will be most opportune for this chapter and this century.

Stephen A. Douglas was in 1857 the greatest political leader of the Democratic party, that had been in control of the national government in all its councils, save a few brief and irregular intervals, since the days of George Washington.

Douglas, known as the "Little Giant" of Illinois, was a good lawyer, a great orator, and was looked forward to as the candidate of his party for the presidency of the United States.

He made a speech, upon invitation of the federal grand jury of Springfield, Illinois, in 1857, in which he said, among other things, that "all men are created equal," meant only that "British subjects on this continent were equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain."

The speech was concededly a very able one and aroused wide comment throughout Illinois. A number of Lincoln's friends at once appealed to him to answer that speech. Lincoln accepted the invitation, and made what was probably one of the strongest and soundest political arguments of his life. In the course of his address he used this language as the fair and sensible interpretation of the Jeffersonian proposition that "all men are created equal":

"I think the authors of that notable instrument

intended to include all men; but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men equal—equal in certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This they said and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet that they were about to confer it upon them. In fact, they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right, so that the enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit. They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and, even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere."

One year thereafter, on August 12, 1858, and also before the Douglas debates, Lincoln made the speech at Beardstown, Illinois, in which he recurs to the same matter but at somewhat greater length. The report of this speech was written by Mr. Horace White of the Chicago *Tribune:*

"These by their representatives in old Independence Hall said to the whole race of men: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights: that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' This was their

majestic interpretation of the economy of the universe. This was their lofty, and wise, and noble understanding of the justice of the Creator to his creatures—yes, gentlemen, to all his creatures, to the whole great family of man. In their enlightened belief, nothing stamped with the divine image and likeness was sent into the world to be trodden on and degraded and imbruted by its fellows: They grasped not only the whole race of man then living, but they reached forward and seized upon the farthest posterity. They erected a beacon to guide their children, and their children's children, and the countless myriads who should inhabit the earth in other ages. Wise statesmen as they were, they knew the tendency of prosperity to breed tyrants, and so they established these great self-evident truths, that when in the distant future some man, some faction, some interest, should set up the doctrine that none but rich men, none but white men, or none but Anglo-Saxon white men were entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, their posterity might look up again to the Declaration of Independence and take courage to renew the battle which their fathers began, so that truth and justice and mercy and all the humane and Christian virtues might not be extinguished from the land; so that no man would hereafter dare to limit and circumscribe the great principles on which the temple of liberty was being built.

"Now, my countrymen, if you have been taught doctrines conflicting with the great landmarks of the Declaration of Independence; if you have listened to suggestions which would take away from its grandeur and mutilate the fair symmetry of its proportions; if you have been inclined to believe that all men are

not created equal in those inalienable rights enumerated by our chart of liberty: let me entreat you to come back. Return to the fountain whose waters spring close by the Blood of the Revolution. Think nothing of me; take no thought for the political fate of any man whomsoever, but come back to the truths that are in the Declaration of Independence. You may do anything with me you choose, if you will but heed these sacred principles. You may not only defeat me for the Senate, but you may take me and put me to death. While pretending no indifference to earthly honors, I do claim to be actuated in this contest by something higher than an anxiety for office. I charge you to drop every paltry and insignificant thought for any man's success. It is nothing; I am nothing; Judge Douglas is nothing. But do not destroy that immortal emblem of humanity—the Declaration of American Independence." *

In Lincoln's great speech at Chicago, in June, 1858, before the debates, he said upon the Declaration of Independence:

"Now, sirs, for the purpose of squaring things with this idea of 'don't care if slavery is voted up or voted down,' for sustaining the Dred Scott decision, for holding that the Declaration of Independence did not mean anything at all, we have Judge Douglas giving his exposition of what the Declaration of Independence means, and we have him saying that the people of America are equal to the people of England. According to his construction, you Germans are not connected with it. Now, I ask you in all soberness, if all these things, if indulged in, if ratified, if confirmed and indorsed, if taught to our children, and repeated to them,

* Herndon, vol. II, p. 84.

do not tend to rub out the sentiment of liberty in the country, and to transform this government into a government of some other form. Those arguments that are made, that the inferior race are to be treated with as much allowance as they are capable of enjoying; that as much is to be done for them as their condition will allow. What are these arguments? They are the arguments that kings have made for enslaving the people in all ages of the world. You will find that all the arguments in favor of kingcraft were of this class; they always bestrode the necks of the people, not that they wanted to do it, but because the people were better off for being ridden. That is their argument, and this argument of the Judge is the same old serpent that says, You work, and I eat; you toil, and I will enjoy the fruits of it. Turn in whatever way you will, whether it come from the mouth of a king, an excuse for enslaving the people of his country, or from the mouth of men of one race as a reason for enslaving the men of another race, it is all the same old serpent; and I hold, if that course of argumentation that is made for the purpose of convincing the public mind that we should not care about this, should be granted, it does not stop with the negro. I should like to know if, taking this old Declaration of Independence, which declares that all men are equal upon principle, and making exceptions to it, where will it stop? If one man says it does not mean a negro, why not another say it does not mean some other man? If that declaration is not the truth, let us get the statute book, in which we find it, and tear it out! (Cries of 'No, No.') Let us stick to it, then; let us stand firmly by it then."

The week following the Chicago speech he again

refers to the Declaration of Independence in a speech he delivered at Springfield, Illinois:

"My declaration upon this subject of negro slavery may be misrepresented, but cannot be misunderstood. I have said that I do not understand the Declaration to mean that all men were created equal in all respects. They are not our equal in color; but I suppose that it does mean to declare that all men are equal in some respects; they are equal in their right to 'life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' Certainly the negro is not our equal in color,—perhaps not in many other respects; still, in the right to put into his mouth the bread that his own hands have earned, he is the equal of every other man, white or black. In pointing out that more has been given you, you cannot be justified in taking away the little which has been given him. All I ask for the negro is that if you do not like him, let him alone. If God gave him but little, that little let him enjoy."

Throughout the Douglas-Lincoln debates in the campaign for the United States senatorship, reference to which is made in another chapter, Lincoln was declaring and defining the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence as written by Jefferson, and adopted by the Federal Congress, while Douglas was endeavoring to restrict the meaning so as to apply only to white men or English subjects. A typical illustration from these debates, as bearing upon the Declaration of Independence, as understood by Lincoln, will be pertinent here.

In the first debate at Ottawa, August 21, 1858, Lincoln said:

"I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and the black races. There

is a physical difference between the two which, in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality; and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superior position. I have never said anything to the contrary, but I hold that, notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas he is not my equal in many respects—certainly not in color, perhaps not in moral or intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal, and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man."

Later on, in the very notable address in February, 1861, at Philadelphia, indeed in the very Independence Hall, Lincoln said:

"I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing here in this place, where were collected the wisdom and patriotism and devotion to principle from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to the present distracted condition of the country. I can say in return, Sir, that *all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn so far as I have been able to draw them from the sentiments which originated and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.* I have often pondered over

the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration of Independence. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. . . . It was not the mere matter of a separation of the Colonies from the Motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, *but I hope to the world for all future time.* It was that which gave promise that in due time the weight would be lifted from the shoulders of all men. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on this basis? If it can I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say *I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender.*"

In view of all these declarations by Lincoln expressing with emphasis his abiding faith in the principles of the Declaration of Independence as the fundamental democracy of this country, it was entirely fitting that the great Magna Charta of his practical, patriotic democracy should be given at Gettysburg as the climax of it all.

Lincoln's great political teacher in democracy, anticipating the end, wrote his own epitaph in these modest words:

"Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom, and father of the University of Virginia."

He didn't even mention that he had been President of the United States for eight years, deeming it was

nobler to have contributed something to the political, religious, and intellectual liberty of the American people.

Had Lincoln written his own epitaph, at the close of his eventful life, the phrase in his own inimitable phrase, would perhaps have been something about *liberty* and *democracy*.

Most of us have read the Declaration of Independence. Few of us have studied it. Perhaps no other great American has given it the studious thought and analytical attention as did Abraham Lincoln.

It must have made a very profound impression upon him, else he would not have so earnestly and so often quoted it, discussed it, interpreted it, and applied it to the political conditions of the time.

Most of us have accepted its sentiments as "self-evident." At least we have given little thought to the logic that its lines develop. It is a poem of patriotism in prose. But it is more. It is a masterpiece of logic well worthy of an Aristotle, a Whateley, or a Mill.

As Lincoln himself has said in his speech at Philadelphia, February, 1861, heretofore referred to:

"I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. . . . It was not the mere matter of a separation of the Colonies from the Motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, *but I hope to the world for all future time.* It was that which gave promise that in due time the weight would be lifted from the shoulders of all men. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence."

But Lincoln got more than sentiment from this Declaration, which he read in his early Indiana days out of David Turnham's "Revised Statutes of Indiana." Perchance he also may have read it in the "History of the United States," though we are not told whether such history contained the Declaration in full or not. At all events he must have learned it by heart at an early age, and its rich outcroppings appear almost continually in his course of political discussions and state papers.

But the logic of that immortal document, as written by Jefferson, provided Lincoln with the key to those fundamental political doctrines that furnished the underpinning of our national democracy.

Let us give heed for a moment to this Declaration. Naturally, first comes the preamble, a masterly statement.

Then comes the *declaration* of self-evident truths: "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Next comes the *demonstration* that these self-evident rights have been constantly and cardinally violated, viz.:

"But when a long train of abuses and usurpations,

pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world."

Then follow eighteen separate paragraphs, specifying the manner in which the aforesaid "self-evident" rights of the American colonists have been violated, all stated so simply, so strongly, that it is nine-tenths an argument.

After demonstration is completed then comes, *dedication:*

"We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; . . . and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. *And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.*"

Signed by the thirteen colonies through their fifty-six delegates.

The reader will note the significant and orderly arrangement of this illustrious argument:

1. Declaration.
2. Demonstration.
3. Dedication.

And this afterward served as the strong, splendid model of Abraham Lincoln in substantially all of his legal and political addresses, as well as his masterly state papers.

CHAPTER XVI

GETTYSBURG ORATION

GETTYSBURG—a little village of less than four thousand people in southern Pennsylvania near the Maryland border—became world-famous in 1863 for two reasons:

1. A great battle.
2. A great speech.

"The great battle" is pronounced by historians, especially by Creasy, as one of a class of fifteen decisive battles of the world's wars.

"The great speech" is unclassified. It stands alone as the greatest speech of its kind ever delivered by human tongue.

What made it great?

1. The situation.
2. The speaker.
3. The speech.

"The great battle" had taken place July 1–4, 1863. It was one of the most sanguinary struggles that warfare up to then had ever recorded. The city of the dead had become larger than the city of the living. The toll of life and limb, of sacrifice and of suffering had been appalling in that heroic struggle, but where "American met American." The side that stood for liberty and democracy had overwhelmingly triumphed.

A great national call went up over the land that some of this sacred soil should be set apart for a national cemetery for the honored dead.

The governors of the States conferred about it and the Honorable Andrew G. Curtin, the distinguished war governor of Pennsylvania, was given local charge and designated one David Wills as his agent to take care of the routine of the arrangements.

Wills wrote a letter to Abraham Lincoln, as President of the United States, inviting him to be present upon that occasion.

A very pertinent part of that letter reads as follows:

". . . Hon. Edward Everett will deliver the oration. I am authorized by the Governors of the different states to invite you to be present and participate in these ceremonies, which will doubtless be very imposing and solemnly impressive. It is the desire that *after the oration*, you, as chief executive of the nation, formally set apart these grounds to their sacred use by a *few appropriate remarks*."

The ceremonies took place November 19, 1863. The presidential party arrived from Washington the day before, and was composed of the President, Secretary of State Seward, Postmaster-General Blair, Secretary of the Interior Usher, John G. Nicolay, and John Hay, the President's secretaries, and Captain H. A. Wise and wife, the latter a daughter of the Honorable Edward Everett, together with many newspaper correspondents and a military guard of honor.

The night before a public reception was held by the good citizens of Gettysburg, at which there was some speech-making.

The President, of course, was called on, but expressed a desire to reserve his remarks for the following day.

Secretary Seward was also called on and delivered a brief address, which is as follows:

"I am thankful that you are willing to hear me at

last. I thank my God that I believe this strife is going to end in the removal of all that evil which ought to have been removed by deliberate counsel and peaceable means (good). I thank my God for the hope . . . that when that cause is removed simply by the operation of abolishing it as the origin and agent of the treason that it is without justification and without parallel, we shall henceforth be united, be only one country, having only one hope, one ambition and one destiny. To-morrow at least we shall feel that we are not enemies, but that we are friends and brothers, that this union is a reality and we shall moan together for the evil wrought by this rebellion. . . . When we part to-morrow night let us remember that we owe it to our country and to mankind that this war shall have for its conclusion the establishment of the principle of Democratic government . . . the simple principle that whatever party, whatever portion of the community prevails by constitutional suffrage in an election, that party is to be respected and maintained in power until it shall give place, on another trial and another verdict, to a different portion of the people. If you do not do this you are drifting at once and irresistibly to the very verge of universal, cheerless, and hopeless anarchy."

When placed in parallel columns with the "few appropriate remarks" of Lincoln, the day following, it can be confidently said that the "rail-splitter" of the new West does not suffer in comparison with his scholarly and distinguished Secretary of State.

We had had two awful years of war. No one ventured to see the end. The triumphs of Grant and Sherman had not yet come. The tremendous loss of life and treasure, suffering and sacrifice was to be endured for two years more until Appomattox.

In this appalling situation the morning of November 19 had come when Edward Everett, in a masterly, eloquent, and histrionic address of two hours delivered "the oration."

Then came Lincoln, who was assigned the task of making a "few appropriate remarks."

The air was still charged with the eloquence of Everett. Its echoes still hallowed every heart of those who heard. Probably but few of the assembled thousands expected any more than a mere formal dedication of that sacred soil for a national cemetery. But no, the ceremonies of the day were not over; they had only begun.

Like Moses of old, delivering a new commandment to his people, so Lincoln, awkward, ungainly, profoundly impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, gives a new commandment to his people for a new "dedication" to "new birth of freedom," and a new democracy in "government of the people by the people and for the people."

Lincoln said:

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow, this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor

power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we may say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

There has been much misinformation in regard to the preparation of this address, some contending that it was wholly extemporaneous, others that it was written on board train between Washington and Gettysburg, some say upon the President's cuff, others upon a mere scrap of paper, presumably an envelope.

Lincoln's speeches almost without exception, certainly all his great speeches, were most carefully thought out, systematically arranged, logically fitted together and painstakingly phrased, generally through manuscript before their delivery.

Those who knew Mr. Lincoln best generally join in the contention that Mr. Lincoln was not a success as an impromptu speaker. The Springfield speech in 1858 and Cooper Union speech in New York in 1860 contain undoubted evidences of that thorough preparation characteristic of Lincoln.

And so as to this Gettysburg address, that is classed as one of his four greatest addresses, Colonel John Nicolay, who was one of his private secretaries and a

member of the presidential party on this occasion, says:

"There is neither recorded evidence, nor well-founded tradition that Mr. Lincoln did any writing or made any notes on the journey between Washington and Gettysburg."

The best available evidence from Nicolay and others is to the effect that the first draft of this speech was prepared in Washington the day before the trip.

Mr. Wills, President Lincoln's host at Gettysburg, says that the President retired about nine o'clock and sent his servant down-stairs for writing-materials. These were taken to Mr. Lincoln's room by Mr. Wills himself. Thereupon Mr. Lincoln said to him: "Mr. Wills, what do you expect from me to-morrow?" Mr. Wills replied: "A brief address, Mr. President."

Mr. Wills reports that in about a half an hour after his visit to President Lincoln's room, Mr. Lincoln came down-stairs, and had some sheets of paper with him, and with Mr. Wills he went to the house in which Secretary Seward was a guest and submitted to the secretary his manuscript. It is said to have met Mr. Seward's approval. They then returned to the Wills home. The next morning a further revision of the manuscript was made.

At the time of the speech Mr. Nicolay advises us that the President held the manuscript in his hand, though he did not read from it, but in his delivery of the speech he further revised the matter and style of the manuscript.

So that the preponderance of the evidence is clear, from those who ought to know, that this speech was most carefully considered, drafted, and redrafted by Mr. Lincoln before its delivery. But if any further

evidence were needed to corroborate painstaking preparation, both as to logic and language, the speech itself furnishes that evidence.

Shortly thereafter a further slight verbal revision was made by Lincoln, which gave us the masterpiece we now know.

For years I have had a sort of subconscious feeling that there was something about this address that I had not discovered. I could feel its effect. It was exhilarating but elusive; when I reached out for it it would seem to be just beyond me.

My curiosity to discover this mystery persisted to the point that I was led to put this speech into its parts, and see what, if anything, would be disclosed. So I dissected it into its ten sentences, and the result of that labor is shown on opposite page.

This dissection of the Gettysburg speech developed the keystone idea of Lincoln upon this occasion. His art in putting this central idea in every one of the ten sentences uttered upon that occasion demonstrates beyond a doubt his unapproachable excellence in logic and language.

How closely it is reasoned, how cleverly expressed! The polish in his patriotism, the philosophy in his propositions, the unity of his ideas are all typical of his great life and his devotion to the union of the States.

What is this keystone idea throughout the address? The colored diagram is its own answer: "DEDICATION."

In these ten sentences the word "dedicate" expressly appears six times. In the fifth sentence the definitive adjective "this" is used for "dedicate."

In the seventh sentence the word "consecrate" is used for "dedicate."

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

(AN ANALYSIS)

Sentence One. Fourscore and seven (eighty-seven) years ago (1776, not 1789) our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation conceived in liberty and DEDICATED to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Sentence Two. Now we are engaged in a great civil war testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived, and so DEDICATED can long endure.

Sentence Three. We are met on a great BATTLEFIELD (where life is dedicated) of that war.

Sentence Four. We have come to DEDICATE a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live.

Sentence Five. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do THIS (DEDICATE).

Sentence Six. But in a larger sense we cannot DEDICATE, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground.

Sentence Seven. The brave men living and dead who struggled here have CONSECRATED it far above our poor power to add or detract.

Sentence Eight The world will little note nor long remember what we may say here, but it can never forget

WHAT THEY DID HERE.

(Dedication of human life.)

Sentence Nine. It is for us the living rather to be DEDICATED here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

Sentence Ten. It is rather for us to be here DEDICATED to the great tasks remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth.

In the third sentence we have the word "battlefield," and in the eighth sentence we have the words "what they did here," the simplest, strongest, and most picturesque language possible to express the active idea of dedication.

As the word "dedicate" was the biggest and best word in the English language in 1863 in mid-war, so that same word "dedicate" is the biggest and best word in the English language to-day when we are likewise in mid-war.

As Jefferson made it the slogan of our spirit and test of the times in 1776, and as Lincoln likewise used it in 1863, so may we all, as one hundred million Americans or more, likewise use it in 1917.

Some have placed the emphasis in this speech upon the last part of the last sentence; some have placed it upon the prepositions "OF," "BY," and "FOR." But I submit, and some who heard it hold, that whatever emphasis was used in this sentence was put, not upon the prepositions, but upon the words "the people." Yet the foregoing diagram unmistakably demonstrates that Lincoln put his emphasis elsewhere—that he placed it properly upon the central idea "dedicate."

How this idea is bound together and linked on to the pole-star of the Declaration of Independence!

Indeed, we find sentence two linked on to sentence one, and sentence three linked on in turn to sentence two, and so on through these ten sentences, link on link, until he had forged a chain of consecration, dedicating the nation to liberty, equality, and democracy.

But this speech was not only remarkable for what it did say; it was equally as remarkable for what it did not say.

Throughout the speech of Edward Everett there

occur the words "rebel" and "rebellion," "slavery," "secession," "treason," and the like, and Secretary Seward, the night before in his short speech, heretofore quoted, used the words "treason," and "rebellion."

But these find no place in the speech of Lincoln. Not a bitter or hateful word is there, and though a man above all others who had been rejected and reviled by the South, he reviled not again.

Truly has Job written, "How forcible are right words"; and I may add also, How forcible are appropriate thoughts!

The Gettysburg address is more than a great oration, it is an index of his mind, an exponent of his spiritual self. It is as perfect a portrait of Abraham Lincoln as could be put in human speech.

In short, we see here the logician, the linguist, the leader, the spirit and soul of a truly great man, moved by "malice toward none and charity for all."

The brevity of the speech is excelled only by the brevity of the words in which it is phrased.

The ten sentences contain 267 immortal words, 200 of which are words of one syllable; 43 words of two syllables and the remainder three or more syllables, but all of them are simple and familiar enough for "any boy I knew to comprehend."

The short Saxon words stand out strongly. Lincoln had never studied Latin or Greek, or any other foreign language, but he did know English, and as a specimen of the purest English this address has to-day an honored place in Oxford University, England.

Note also the absence of the superlative, the descriptive adjective and adverb. The skeleton of his

speech is the concrete noun to which he hitches some active verb or its derivatives.

These words have point and "punch" and, taken together, make a sort of "movie-picture" of patriotic and intense human interest.

In style as much as in subject-matter it excelled all other addresses of his own or any other time. This is the more significant because his specific instructions were to submit "a few appropriate remarks."

The orator of the day was chosen from New England's universities, her culture, her scholarship, her statesmen, Edward Everett. He talked two hours and most of what he said has been forgotten. Lincoln talked two minutes and what he said not only has become a classic, but is hanging upon the walls today of more than a million homes, not only in America but throughout the world.

In a two-minute speech he used the central idea ten times, and the same central word six times—the word "dedicate."

Surely, at some time or other in his earlier life, this word must have made a very profound impression upon him to have been put so prominently in the Gettysburg address.

When, where, and how had he come in contact with it?

We have already seen how in his early days he became an ardent student of the Declaration of Independence. We have seen in the chapter, "Lincoln's Interpretation of the Declaration of Independence," how frequently he referred to it, how thoroughly he analyzed it, what a wonderful impression it made upon his mind and soul.

It is more than passing coincidence that the closing

words of that Declaration of Independence were devoted to a dedication of the Colonists, their lives and treasures, to the cause for which it stood.

It has been said that Lincoln's effort was a sad disappointment to him, and that he was greatly depressed as the result of the utter absence of applause during the address. This, however, would not be strange, even if true, owing to the occasion and the solemnity of the environment, but the New York *Tribune* of the following day shows "applause" five different times during the address, and "long continued applause" at the close. If Lincoln at any time spoke deprecatingly of his effort it was only because it was more or less characteristic of him.

It has been said that Lincoln's effort was a sad disappointment to Everett. This is wholly disproved by the letter that Everett took the pains to write Lincoln the day following the address, in which he said, among other things:

"Permit me to express my great admiration of the thoughts expressed by you with such eloquent simplicity and appropriateness at the consecration of the cemetery. I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

I have gone into the detail of analysis on the Gettysburg speech in order to furnish a model for a similar analysis of Lincoln's other speeches.

They are too long to permit of such separate detailed dissection, as has been applied to this brief oration. But if they shall be studied and separated into their natural and logical parts, it will be seen that in the main they pursue the same unity of thought, simplicity of speech, clearness and conclusiveness in

demonstration, sincerity of dedication that is so strikingly characteristic in the Gettysburg address.

The student, young and old, in or out of high school or college, cannot more pleasurably nor profitably employ his mind than by a careful study and analysis of many of the other great speeches and papers of Abraham Lincoln.

This greatest of the world's orations deserves a tribute from one of the world's greatest orators. Colonel Ingersoll said of the Gettysburg address:

"If you wish to know the difference between an orator and an elocutionist—between what is felt and what is said—between what the heart and brain can do together and what the brain can do alone—read Lincoln's wondrous words at Gettysburg, and then the speech of Edward Everett. The oration of Lincoln will never be forgotten. It will live until languages are dead and lips are dust. The speech of Everett will never be read. The elocutionists believe in the virtue of voice, the sublimity of syntax, the majesty of long sentences, and the genius of gesture. The orator loves the real, the simple, the natural. He places the thought above all. He knows that the greatest ideas should be expressed in the shortest words —that the greatest statues need the least drapery."

CHAPTER XVII

LINCOLN'S GREAT SPRINGFIELD SPEECH

Again it is strikingly demonstrated that his arguments on law, government, or politics were usually bottomed upon some primary legal principle from one of the great masters of the law, some parable or reference from the Bible, or some political proposition from the Declaration of Independence.

No better illustration can be found than the Springfield speech of 1858, which became known as the "House Divided Against Itself" speech.

That speech occupies such a conspicuous and critical position in the political life of Lincoln that it deserves special mention here.

Upon Lincoln's return to Springfield in 1849, at the close of his one term in Congress, we have already noted how he had devoted, yes, had dedicated himself to the practice of the law and to its deeper and broader study. He had little thought of ever again taking an active hand in the politics of the times, but the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854 had so aroused his love for human freedom and his hatred of slavery that he soon again found himself in the political maelstrom.

The Democratic party had lost control of the State Legislature of Illinois in that election. Lincoln was the Whig candidate for the United States senatorship. Feeling that if he continued in the contest he would endanger the election of an antislavery senator, Lincoln magnanimously withdrew and urged his friends

to support Trumbull, an anti-Nebraska Democrat, when, by every fair consideration of politics, Lincoln should then have been the United States senator.

After that campaign he continued largely in the practice of the law until 1858, when Senator Douglas, his old-time rival, was again a candidate for re-election. In the meantime a number of political changes had occurred. Webster's famous, or infamous "7th of March" speech, wherein he apologized and trimmed for all his past position against slavery and lost all the political prestige he had ever had as a Whig leader; Clay's "Alabama" letter in the campaign of 1844, which characteristically compromised upon the grave cause of human liberty, and other like subservience to the controlling slave power of the day, had left the Whig party not only leaderless but issueless. It dissolved and died as it deserved to die.

Upon its ruins rose the new Republican party of 1854 and 1856, and Lincoln became one of its most active members and leaders in the State of Illinois.

One of the policies to which the new party was committed was "to arrest the further spread of slavery," and it was upon this proposition that Abraham Lincoln prepared his great Springfield speech in June of 1858.

After he had carefully prepared the speech and reduced it to manuscript he read it to a number of his friends. Most of them openly condemned it and none approved it. One said "Damned fool utterance," another said, "Impolitic," another said, "It gives unnecessary offense," another said, "It is all right, but it is ahead of its time," and so on.

But Lincoln said:

"My friends, this thing has been retarded long enough. The time has come when these sentiments

should be uttered, and if it is decreed that I should go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to the truth; let me die in the advocacy of what is just and right."

The first paragraph was the one that was especially "impolitic." If that had been omitted there would have been no serious objection to the speech by his party friends.

The speech in full is as follows:

"*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention:*

1. "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year, since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

"Have we no tendency to the latter condition?

2. "Let any one who doubts carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination—piece of

machinery, so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted; but also let him study the history of the construction, and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design and concert of action among its chief architects, from the beginning.

3. "The new year of 1854 found slavery excluded from more than half the States by State constitutions, and from most of the national territory by congressional prohibition. Four days later commenced the struggle which ended in repealing that congressional prohibition. This opened all the national territory to slavery, and was the first point gained.

4. "But, so far, Congress only had acted; and an indorsement by the people, real or apparent, was indispensable to save the point already gained and give chance for more.

5. "This necessity had not been overlooked, but had been provided for, as well as might be, in the notable argument of 'squatter sovereignty,' otherwise called 'sacred right of self-government,' which latter phrase, though expressive of the only rightful basis of any government, was so perverted in this attempted use of it as to amount to just this: That if any one man choose to enslave another, no third man shall be allowed to object. That argument was incorporated into the Nebraska bill itself, in the language which follows: 'It being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom; but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Con-

stitution of the United States.' Then opened the roar of loose declamation in favor of 'squatter sovereignty' and 'sacred right of self-government.' 'But,' said opposition members, 'let us amend the bill so as to expressly declare that the people of the Territory may exclude slavery.' 'Not we,' said the friends of the measure; and down they voted the amendment.

6. "While the Nebraska bill was passing through Congress a law case involving the question of a negro's freedom, by reason of his owner having voluntarily taken him first into a free State and then into a Territory covered by the congressional prohibition, and held him as a slave for a long time in each, was passing through the United States Circuit Court for the District of Missouri; and both Nebraska bill and lawsuit were brought to a decision in the same month of May, 1854. The negro's name was Dred Scott, which name now designates the decision finally made in the case. Before the then next presidential election, the law case came to and was argued in the Supreme Court of the United States; but the decision of it was deferred until after the election. Still, before the election, Senator Trumbull, on the floor of the Senate, requested the leading advocate of the Nebraska bill to state his opinion whether the people of a Territory can constitutionally exclude slavery from their limits; and the latter answered: 'That is a question for the Supreme Court.'

7. "The election came. Mr. Buchanan was elected, and the indorsement, such as it was secured. That was the second point gained. The indorsement, however, fell short of a clear popular majority by nearly four hundred thousand votes, and so, perhaps, was not overwhelmingly reliable and satisfactory. The

outgoing President, in his last annual message, as impressively as possible echoed back upon the people the weight and authority of the indorsement. The Supreme Court met again; did not announce their decision, but ordered a reargument. The presidential inauguration came, and still no decision of the court; but the incoming President in his inaugural address fervently exhorted the people to abide by the forthcoming decision, whatever it might be. Then, in a few days, came the decision.

8. "The reputed author of the Nebraska bill finds an early occasion to make a speech at this capital indorsing the Dred Scott decision, and vehemently denouncing all opposition to it. The new President, too, seizes the early occasion of the Silliman letter to indorse and strongly construe that decision, and to express his astonishment that any different view had ever been entertained!

9. "At length a squabble springs up between the President and the author of the Nebraska bill, on the mere question of fact, whether the Lecompton constitution was or was not, in any just sense, made by the people of Kansas; and in that quarrel the latter declares that all he wants is a fair vote for the people, and that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up. I do not understand his declaration that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up to be intended by him other than as an apt definition of the policy he would impress upon the public mind—the principle for which he declares he has suffered so much, and is ready to suffer to the end. And well may he cling to that principle. If he has any parental feeling, well may he cling to it. That principle is the only shred left of his original Nebraska

doctrine. Under the Dred Scott decision 'squatter sovereignty' squatted out of existence, tumbled down like temporary scaffolding,—like the mold at the foundry, served through one blast and fell back into loose sand,—helped to carry an election, and then kicked to the winds. His late joint struggle with the Republicans against the Lecompton constitution involves nothing of the original Nebraska doctrine. That struggle was made on a point—the right of a people to make their own constitution—upon which he and the Republicans have never differed.

10. "The several points of the Dred Scott decision, in connection with Senator Douglas's 'care not' policy, constitute the piece of machinery in its present state of advancement. This was the third point gained. The working points of that machinery are:

"(1) That no negro slave, imported as such from Africa, and no descendant of such slave, can ever be a citizen of any State, in the sense of that term as used in the Constitution of the United States. This point is made in order to deprive the negro in every possible event of the benefit of that provision of the United States Constitution which declares that 'the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States.'

"(2) That, 'subject to the Constitution of the United States,' neither Congress nor a territorial legislature can exclude slavery from any United States Territory. This point is made in order that individual men may fill up the Territories with slaves, without danger of losing them as property and thus enhance the chances of permanency to the institution through all the future.

"(3) That whether the holding a negro in actual

slavery in a free State makes him free as against the holder, the United States courts will not decide, but will leave to be decided by the courts of any slave State the negro may be forced into by the master. This point is made not to be pressed immediately, but, if acquiesced in for a while, and apparently indorsed by the people at an election, then to sustain the logical conclusion that what Dred Scott's master might lawfully do with Dred Scott in the free State of Illinois, every other master may lawfully do with any other one or one thousand slaves in Illinois or in any other free State.

11. "Auxiliary to all this, and working hand in hand with it, the Nebraska doctrine, or what is left of it, is to educate and mold public opinion, at least Northern public opinion, not to care whether slavery is voted down or voted up. This shows exactly where we now are, and partially, also, whither we are tending.

12. "It will throw additional light on the latter, to go back and run the mind over the string of historical facts already stated. Several things will now appear less dark and mysterious than they did when they were transpiring. The people were to be left 'perfectly free,' 'subject only to the Constitution.' What the Constitution had to do with it outsiders could not then see. Plainly enough now, it was an exactly fitted niche for the Dred Scott decision to afterward come in, and declare the perfect freedom of the people to be just no freedom at all. Why was the amendment expressly declaring the right of the people voted down? Plainly enough now, the adoption of it would have spoiled the niche for the Dred Scott decision. Why was the court decision held up? Why even a senator's

individual opinion withheld till after the presidential election? Plainly enough now, the speaking out then would have damaged the 'perfectly free' argument upon which the election was to be carried. Why the outgoing President's felicitation on the indorsement? Why the delay of a reargument? Why the incoming President's advance exhortation in favor of the decision? These things look like the cautious patting and petting of a spirited horse preparatory to mounting him, when it is dreaded that he may give the rider a fall. And why the hasty after-endorsement of the decision by the President and others?

13. "We cannot absolutely know that all these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places and by different workmen,—Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James, for instance,—and we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortises exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few, not omitting even scaffolding—or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in—in such a case we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck.

14. "It should not be overlooked that, by the Nebraska bill, the people of a State as well as Territory were to be left 'perfectly free,' 'subject only to

the Constitution.' Why mention a State? They were legislating for Territories, and not for or about States. Certainly the people of a State are and ought to be subject to the Constitution of the United States; but why is mention of this lugged into this merely territorial law? Why are the people of a Territory and the people of a State therein lumped together, and their relation to the Constitution therein treated as being precisely the same? While the opinion of the court, by Chief Justice Taney, in the Dred Scott case, and the separate opinions of all the concurring judges, expressly declare that the Constitution of the United States neither permits Congress nor a territorial legislature to exclude slavery from any United States Territory, they all omit to declare whether or not the same Constitution permits a State, or the people of a State, to exclude it. Possibly, this is a mere omission; but who can be quite sure, if McLean or Curtis had sought to get into the opinion a declaration of unlimited power in the people of a State to exclude slavery from their limits, just as Chase and Mace sought to get such declaration, in behalf of the people of a Territory, into the Nebraska bill—I ask, who can be quite sure that it would not have been voted down in the one case as it had been in the other? The nearest approach to the point of declaring the power of a State over slavery is made by Judge Nelson. He approaches it more than once, using the precise idea, and almost the language too, of the Nebraska act. On one occasion his exact language is: 'Except in case where the power is restrained by the Constitution of the United States, the law of the State is supreme over the subject of slavery within its jurisdiction.' In what cases the power of the States is so restrained by

the United States Constitution is left an open question, precisely as the same question as to the restraint on the power of the Territories was left open in the Nebraska act. Put this and that together, and we have another nice little niche, which we may, ere long, see filled with another Supreme Court decision declaring that the Constitution of the United States does not permit a State to exclude slavery from its limits. And this may especially be expected if the doctrine of 'care not whether slavery be voted down or voted up' shall gain upon the public mind sufficiently to give promise that such a decision can be maintained when made.

15. "Such a decision is all that slavery now lacks of being alike lawful in all the States. Welcome, or unwelcome, such decision is probably coming, and will soon be upon us, unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown. We shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their State free, and we shall awake to the reality instead that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave State. To meet and overthrow the power of that dynasty is the work now before all those who would prevent that consummation. That is what we have to do. How can we best do it?

16. "There are those who denounce us openly to their own friends, and yet whisper us softly that Senator Douglas is the aptest instrument there is with which to effect that object. They wish us to infer all from the fact that he now has a little quarrel with the present head of the dynasty; and that he has regularly voted with us on a single point upon which he and we have never differed. They remind us that he is a great man and that the largest of us are very small ones. Let

this be granted. But 'a living dog is better than a dead lion.' Judge Douglas, if not a dead lion for this work, is at least a caged and toothless one. How can he oppose the advances of slavery? He don't care anything about it. His avowed mission is impressing the 'public heart' to care nothing about it. A leading Douglas newspaper thinks Douglas's superior talent will be needed to resist the revival of the African slave-trade. Does Douglas believe an effort to revive that trade is approaching? He has not said so. Does he really think so? But if it is, how can he resist it? For years he has labored to prove it a sacred right of white men to take negro slaves into the new Territories. Can he possibly show that it is less a sacred right to buy them where they can be bought cheapest? And unquestionably they can be bought cheaper in Africa than in Virginia. He has done all in his power to reduce the whole question of slavery to one of a mere right of property; and as such, how can he oppose the foreign slave-trade? How can he refuse that trade in that 'property' shall be 'perfectly free,' unless he does it as a protection to the home production? And as the home producers will probably not ask the protection, he will be wholly without a ground of opposition.

17. "Senator Douglas holds, we know, that a man may rightfully be wiser to-day than he was yesterday —that he may rightfully change when he finds himself wrong. But can we, for that reason, run ahead, and infer that he will make any particular change of which he, himself, has given no intimation? Can we safely base our action upon any such vague inference? Now, as ever, I wish not to misrepresent Judge Douglas's position, question his motives, or do aught that can be personally offensive to him. Whenever, if ever,

he and we can come together on principle so that our great cause may have assistance from his great ability, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle. But clearly, he is not now with us—he does not pretend to be—he does not promise ever to be.

18. "Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends—those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work, who do care for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now?—now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come."

The speech made a "profound impression." But it did much more than that; it was the one speech discussed not only in Springfield but throughout Illinois, and more or less throughout the North and even parts of the South.

Some of the Republicans were considerably dissatisfied with some of the things that Lincoln had said. Some of his most intimate friends remonstrated with him as to his political indiscretion. To one of these critics he said:

"If I had to draw a pen across my record and erase my whole life from sight and I had one poor gift or

choice left as to what I should save from the wreck I should choose that speech and leave it to the world unerased."

In my judgment this speech did more in the making of the man Lincoln, the logician Lincoln, and represented more of the lawyer Lincoln and the political general Lincoln than any other speech he ever made.

This speech was the underpinning of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. In conjunction with the Cooper Union speech, treated in a separate chapter, it had more to do with his nomination for the presidency than any other words he ever uttered.

Let us analyze the speech as the lawyer and logician uttered it.

Note that in the very first paragraph of this speech he plants himself squarely upon a proposition from Holy Writ—Matthew, 12th chapter, 25th verse:

"And Jesus knew their thoughts and said unto them, every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."

The verity of that proposition had not been questioned for over eighteen centuries and Lincoln did not think it could be successfully questioned now; so he bottomed his great speech upon that elementary proposition as announced by Jesus of Nazareth when he was reproving the Pharisees of old. As a corollary to that proposition he says:

"Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction or its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

"Have we no tendency to the latter condition?"

Here now is his basic proposition:

1. The "half slave" and "half free" constitute the "divided house."

2. Such a house cannot stand—"it will become all one thing or all the other."

3. The tendency of the times is to "push it (slavery) forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the States."

As discussed before, Lincoln's method was so exceedingly simple that we naturally overlook it.

First comes his statement of fact, next his declaration of the principles involved, then he proceeds to demonstrate the soundness of his position as to the facts and the application of his principles thereto.

Throughout his public discussions "declaration" comes first, "demonstration" next, and very shortly, if the cause be near his heart as this was, there follows a "dedication" to the cause.

From the second to the twelfth paragraph, inclusive, he presents his evidence, and then demonstrates the fact to be that there was a "legal combination—'piece of machinery,' so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine (legislative) and the Dred Scott decision" (judicial decree) all adapted to and conducive to such extension and nationalization of slavery.

Having now laid the groundwork by strong circumstantial proof, he boldly makes the charge contained in paragraph 13 as follows:

"We cannot absolutely know that all these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places and by different workmen,—Stephen, Frank-

lin, Roger, and James, for instance,—and we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortises exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few, not omitting even scaffolding—or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in—in such a case we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck."

That was a heroic thing to say. But Lincoln felt that he had demonstrated it as conclusively as any political policy was capable of demonstration, and suffice it to say, there never was any serious and successful attempt made to answer it. Of course it was categorically denied. The opposition undertook to laugh it out of court, but the charge stuck. It had all the earmarks of truth in it and the people believed it.

Note the concrete noun that he uses as the base of every thought and then he hitches up to the concrete noun the active verb, so that you get a sort of picture upon the mental screen. In this paragraph you can see the President of the United States, James Buchanan, and his predecessor, Franklin Pierce, confer with the judge of the Supreme Court, Roger B. Taney, and the Democratic legislative leader, Stephen A. Douglas, colaboring on a policy to nationalize slavery throughout North and South, East and West.

In paragraph 14 Lincoln then attacks the Dred Scott

decision, which was a part of this political conspiracy to fasten slavery upon the people against their will.

The 15th paragraph anticipates another decision to fill "the niche" considerately left open to complete the conspiracy announced in paragraph 13.

Again, here comes political generalship. Lincoln realized, as no other man did, that great effort would be made in behalf of Senator Douglas, because of his having taken a stand against the Lecompton Constitution and against the administration's effort to have that constitution ratified by the people of Kansas. Therefore, some would say that Senator Douglas was "the aptest instrument to overthrow the power of that dynasty," though, as Lincoln charged, he was one of the conspirators to extend and perpetuate the slave power.

Lincoln aptly asks:

"How can he oppose the advances of slavery? He don't care anything about it. (Douglas had frequently said he didn't care whether it was voted up or voted down.) His avowed mission is impressing the 'public heart' to care nothing about it. . . . For years he has labored to prove it a sacred right of white men to take negro slaves into the new Territories. Can he possibly show that it is less a sacred right to buy them where they can be bought cheapest? And unquestionably they can be bought cheaper in Africa than in Virginia. He has done all in his power to reduce the whole question of slavery to one of a mere right of property."

Lincoln was determined that the issue should not be misunderstood by the people; that the claim made that Senator Douglas had changed his political views and that he was entitled to change them should not fool

the people, and upon that proposition he said, in paragraph 17:

"Senator Douglas holds, we know, that a man may rightfully be wiser to-day than he was yesterday—that he may rightfully change when he finds himself wrong. . . . But clearly, he is not now with us—he does not pretend to be—he does not promise ever to be."

Lincoln then closes with paragraph 18, which is so important in public leadership on great questions to-day that it cannot be too often repeated. He says:

"Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends—those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work, who do care for the result. . . . Did we brave all then (two years ago) to falter now?—now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come."

CHAPTER XVIII

LINCOLN AT COOPER UNION

When is a defeat not a defeat?

Lincoln's fight for the faith of the fathers in "arresting the further spread of slavery," in placing slavery where it was "in the course of ultimate extinction," had only begun.

Temporarily it was in abeyance, but as we shall soon see, the smouldering fires would inevitably break forth in the great contest that was unavoidable—the campaign of 1860.

The real disaster was not to Lincoln's political prospects, but really to his financial. In a letter to Chairman Judd of the Republican State Committee, written at the close of that campaign in 1858, Lincoln said:

"I have been on expense so long, without earning anything, that I am absolutely without money now for even household expenses. Still, if you can put in $250 for me towards discharging the debt of the committee, I will allow it when you and I settle the private matter between us. This, with what I have already paid, with an outstanding note of mine, will exceed my subscription of $500. This, too, is exclusive of my ordinary expenses during the campaign, all of which, being added to my loss of time and business, bears pretty heavily upon one no better off than I am. But as I had the post of honor, it is not for me to be overnice."

Herndon, in speaking of his financial situation at this time, says:*

"At the time this letter was written his property consisted of the house and lot on which he lived, a few law books and some household furniture. He owned a small tract of land in Iowa which yielded him nothing, and the annual income from his law practice did not exceed $3,000."

During the following winter Lincoln prepared a lecture on "inventions." After delivering it two or three times it proved such a flat failure that he abandoned the lecture platform.

Mr. Henry C. Whitney writes:

"I read in the paper that he had come to either Bloomington or Clinton to lecture, and no one turned out. The paper added 'that doesn't look much like his being President.' I once joked him about it; he said good naturedly, 'Don't, that plagues me.'"

In October, 1859, he received an invitation to go to New York City to deliver a lecture. He accepted the invitation from New York with the suggestion that he would deliver a speech on the political questions of the day some time in the following February. The original plan contemplated a lecture in Mr. Beecher's church in Brooklyn. The change of subject and the change in the spirit of the times led to a choice of Cooper Institute, where the speech was finally given under the auspices of the Young Men's Republican Club.

As was Lincoln's habit in the preparation of all his public addresses, he devoted himself enthusiastically and painstakingly to the preparation of this speech. He was, in a popular phrase, to invade the "enemy's country."

* Vol. II, page 157.

The culture and scholarship of the East had not been very kindly disposed to the awkward and unschooled "Big Giant" of Illinois.

Seward, the scholar, the statesman, of broad culture and distinguished public service as governor of the Empire State, and then representing that State in the United States Senate, was the idol of the East.

To pave the way for his friends who were already organizing for his nomination at Chicago, as the Republican candidate for President, Lincoln spared neither time nor effort in the preparation of the Cooper Union address, which for political logic, plain, persuasive phrase, bottomed upon indisputable historic fact, has never been excelled. It was to be for the East what the Springfield speech of 1858 was for the West.

Dressed in a new but ill-fitting suit of clothes, Mr. Lincoln arrived in New York. Probably there never assembled in that great city a more representative audience, in party prominence, general scholarship, business success, and the great middle class from all lines of industry and commerce, than the audience that packed the doors that night to hear the future President of the United States.

William Cullen Bryant, then editor of the New York *Evening Post*, was the presiding officer. Among other things, in introducing Mr. Lincoln, he said:

"It is a grateful office I perform in introducing to you an eminent citizen of the West, hitherto known to you only by reputation."

For a fair, full, and forcible statement of the slavery question, as it then presented itself to the American people, upon the eve of a great national campaign, this speech is worthy of reproduction here.

Senator Douglas, his old-time rival, in a speech at

Columbus, Ohio, delivered the previous fall, used this language:

"Our Fathers when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question (the question of slavery) just as well, and even better, than we do now."

This furnished the common ground between Douglas and Lincoln, who were the great political leaders of the West, and led to Lincoln asking this question: Did that understanding of the fathers "forbid the Federal Government control as to slavery in our Federal territories?"

This great speech contains the best evidence of its own greatness as well as Lincoln's and is given here in full:

ADDRESS AT COOPER INSTITUTE, NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 27, 1860

"Mr. President and Fellow-Citizens of New York: The facts with which I shall deal this evening are mainly old and familiar; nor is there anything new in the general use I shall make of them. If there shall be any novelty, it will be in the mode of presenting the facts, and the inferences and observations following that presentation. In his speech last autumn at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in the New York *Times*, Senator Douglas said:

"'Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now.'

"I fully indorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. I so adopt it because it furnishes a precise and an agreed starting-point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed

by Senator Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?

"What is the frame of government under which we live? The answer must be, 'The Constitution of the United States.' That Constitution consists of the original, framed in 1787, and under which the present government first went into operation, and twelve subsequently framed amendments, the first ten of which were framed in 1789.

"Who were our fathers that framed the Constitution? I suppose the 'thirty-nine' who signed the original instrument may be fairly called our fathers who framed that part of the present government. It is almost exactly true to say they framed it, and it is altogether true to say they fairly represented the opinion and sentiment of the whole nation at that time. Their names, being familiar to nearly all, and accessible to quite all, need not now be repeated.

"I take these 'thirty-nine,' for the present as being 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live.' What is the question which, according to the text, those fathers understood 'just as well, and even better, than we do now'?

"It is this: Does the proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid our Federal Government to control as to slavery in our Federal Territories?

"Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and the Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue; and this issue—this question—is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood 'better than we.' Let us now inquire whether the 'thirty-nine,' or any of them, ever acted upon this

question; and if they did, how they acted upon it—how they expressed that better understanding. In 1784, three years before the Constitution, the United States then owning the Northwestern Territory, and no other, the Congress of the Confederation had before them the question of prohibiting slavery in that Territory; and four of the 'thirty-nine' who afterward framed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on that question. Of these Roger Sherman, Thomas Mifflin and Hugh Williamson voted for the prohibition, thus showing that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the Federal Government control as to slavery in Federal territory. The other of the four, James McHenry, voted against the prohibition, showing that for some cause he thought it improper to vote for it.

"In 1787, still before the Constitution, but while the convention was in session framing it, and while the Northwestern Territory still was the only Territory owned by the United States, the same question of prohibiting slavery in the Territory again came before the Congress of the Confederation; and two more of the 'thirty-nine' who afterward signed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on the question. They were William Blount and William Few; and they both voted for the prohibition—thus showing that in their understanding no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory. This time the prohibition became a law, being part of what is now well known as the ordinance of '87.

"The question of Federal control of slavery in the

Territories seems not to have been directly before the convention which framed the original Constitution; and hence it is not recorded that the 'thirty-nine,' or any of them, while engaged on that instrument, expressed any opinion on that precise question.

"In 1789, by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution, an act was passed to enforce the ordinance of '87, including the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. The bill for this act was reported by one of the 'thirty-nine'—Thomas Fitzsimmons, then a member of the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania. It went through all its stages without a word of opposition, and finally passed both branches without ayes and nays, which is equivalent to a unanimous passage. In this Congress there were sixteen of the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman, Wm. S. Johnson, Roger Sherman, Robert Morris, Thos. Fitzsimmons, William Few, Abraham Baldwin, Rufus King, William Paterson, George Clymer, Richard Bassett, George Read, Pierce Butler, Daniel Carroll and James Madison.

"This shows that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, properly forbade Congress to prohibit slavery in the Federal territory; else both their fidelity to correct principle, and their oath to support the Constitution, would have constrained them to oppose the prohibition.

"Again, George Washington, another of the 'thirty-nine,' was then President of the United States and as such approved and signed the bill, thus completing its validity as a law, and thus showing that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from Federal

authority, nor anything in the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

"No great while after the adoption of the original Constitution, North Carolina ceded to the Federal Government the country now constituting the State of Tennessee; and a few years later Georgia ceded that which now constitutes the States of Mississippi and Alabama. In both deeds of cession it was made a condition by the ceding States that the Federal Government should not prohibit slavery in the ceded country. Besides this, slavery was then actually in the ceded country. Under these circumstances, Congress, on taking charge of these countries did not absolutely prohibit slavery within them. But they did interfere with it—take control of it—even there, to a certain extent. In 1798 Congress organized the Territory of Mississippi. In the act of organization they prohibited the bringing of slaves into the Territory from any place without the United States, by fine, and giving freedom to slaves so brought. This act passed both branches of Congress without yeas and nays. In that Congress were three of the 'thirty-nine' who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, George Read, and Abraham Baldwin. They all probably voted for it. Certainly they would have placed their opposition to it upon record if, in their understanding, any line dividing local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, properly forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

"In 1803 the Federal Government purchased the Louisiana country. Our former territorial acquisitions came from certain of our own States; but this Louisiana

country was acquired from a foreign nation. In 1804 Congress gave a territorial organization to that part of it which now constitutes the State of Louisiana. New Orleans, lying within that part, was an old and comparatively large city. There were other considerable towns and settlements, and slavery was extensively and thoroughly intermingled with the people. Congress did not, in the Territorial Act, prohibit slavery; but they did interfere with it—take control of it—in a more marked and extensive way than they did in the case of Mississippi. The substance of the provision therein made in relation to slaves was:

"1st. That no slave should be imported into the Territory from foreign parts.

"2d. That no slave should be carried into it, who had been imported into the United States since the first day of May, 1798.

"3d. That no slave should be carried into it, except by the owner, and for his own use as a settler; the penalty in all the cases being a fine upon the violator of the law, and freedom to the slave.

"This act also was passed without ayes or nays. In the Congress which passed it there were two of the 'thirty-nine.' They were Abraham Baldwin and Jonathan Dayton. As stated in the case of Mississippi, it is probable they both voted for it. They would not have allowed it to pass without recording their opposition to it if, in their understanding, it violated either the line properly dividing local from Federal authority, or any provision of the Constitution.

"In 1819–20 came and passed the Missouri question. Many votes were taken, by yeas and nays, in both branches of Congress, upon the various phases of the general question. Two of the 'thirty-nine'—

Rufus King and Charles Pinckney—were members of that Congress. Mr. King steadily voted for slavery prohibition and against all compromises, while Mr. Pinckney as steadily voted against slavery prohibition and against all compromises. By this Mr. King showed that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, was violated by Congress prohibiting slavery in Federal territory; while Mr. Pinckney, by his votes, showed that, in his understanding, there was some sufficient reason for opposing such prohibition in that case.

"The cases I have mentioned are the only acts of the 'thirty-nine,' or of any of them, upon the direct issue, which I have been able to discover.

"To enumerate the persons who thus acted as being four in 1784, two in 1787, seventeen in 1789, three in 1798, two in 1804, and two in 1819–20, there would be thirty of them. But this would be counting John Langdon, Roger Sherman, William Few, Rufus King, and George Read each twice, and Abraham Baldwin three times. The true number of those of the 'thirty-nine' whom I have shown to have acted upon the question which, by the text, they understood better than we, is twenty-three, leaving sixteen now shown to have acted upon it in any way.

"Here, then, we have twenty-three out of our thirty-nine fathers 'who framed the government under which we live,' who have, upon their official responsibility and their corporal oaths, acted upon the very question which the text affirms they 'understood just as well, and even better, than we do now'; and twenty-one of them—a clear majority of the whole 'thirty-nine'—so acting upon it as to make them guilty of gross polit-

ical impropriety and wilful perjury if, in their understanding, any proper division between local and Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution they had made themselves, and sworn to support, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. Thus the twenty-one acted; and, as actions speak louder than words, so actions under such responsibility speak still louder.

"Two of the twenty-three voted against congressional prohibition of slavery in the Federal Territories, in the instances in which they acted upon the question. But for what reasons they so voted is not known. They may have done so because they thought a proper division of local from Federal authority, or some provision or principle of the Constitution, stood in the way; or they may, without any such question, have voted against the prohibition on what appeared to them to be sufficient grounds of expediency. No one who has sworn to support the Constitution can conscientiously vote for what he understands to be an unconstitutional measure, however expedient he may think it; but one may and ought to vote against a measure which he deems constitutional if, at the same time, he deems it inexpedient. It, therefore, would be unsafe to set down even the two who voted against the prohibition as having done so because, in their understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

"The remaining sixteen of the 'thirty-nine,' so far as I have discovered, have left no record of their understanding upon the direct question of Federal control of slavery in the Federal Territories. But there is much reason to believe that their understanding upon

that question would not have appeared different from that of their twenty-three compeers, had it been manifest at all.

"For the purpose of adhering rigidly to the text, I have purposely omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any person, however distinguished, other than the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution; and, for the same reason, I have also omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any of the 'thirty-nine' even on any other phase of the general question of slavery. If we should look into their acts and declarations on those other phases, as the foreign slave-trade, and the morality and policy of slavery generally, it would appear to us that on the direct question of Federal control of slavery in Federal Territories, the sixteen, if they had acted at all, would probably have acted just as the twenty-three did. Among that sixteen were several of the most noted antislavery men of those times,—as Dr. Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris,—while there was not one now known to have been otherwise, unless it may be John Rutledge, of South Carolina.

"The sum of the whole is that out of thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution, twenty-one —a clear majority of the whole—certainly understood that no proper division of local from Federal authority, nor any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control slavery in the Federal Territories; while all the rest had probably the same understanding. Such unquestionably was the understanding of our fathers who framed the original Constitution; and the text affirms that they understood the question 'better than we.'

"But, so far, I have been considering the understanding of the question manifested by the framers of the original Constitution. In and by the original instrument, a mode was provided for amending it; and, as I have already stated, the present frame of 'the government under which we live' consists of that original, and twelve amendatory articles framed and adopted since. Those who now insist that Federal control of slavery in Federal Territories violates the Constitution, point us to the provisions which they suppose it thus violates; and, as I understand, they all fix upon provisions in these amendatory articles, and not in the original instrument. The Supreme Court, in the Dred Scott case, plant themselves upon the Fifth Amendment, which provides that no person shall be deprived of 'life, liberty, or property without due process of law'; while Senator Douglas and his peculiar adherents plant themselves upon the Tenth Amendment, providing that 'the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution' 'are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.'

"Now, it so happens that these amendments were framed by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution—the identical Congress which passed the act, already mentioned, enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. Not only was it the same Congress, but they were the identical, same individual men who, at the same session, and at the same time within the session, had under consideration, and in progress toward maturity, these constitutional amendments, and this act prohibiting slavery in all the territory the nation then owned. The constitutional amendments were introduced before, and passed after, the act enforcing the ordinance of '87; so that, during

the whole pendency of the act to enforce the ordinance, the constitutional amendments were also pending.

"The seventy-six members of that Congress, including sixteen of the framers of the original Constitution, as before stated, were preeminently our fathers who framed that part of 'the government under which we live' which is now claimed as forbidding the Federal Government to control slavery in the Federal Territories.

"Is it not a little presumptuous in any one at this day to affirm that the two things which that Congress deliberately framed, and carried to maturity at the same time, are absolutely inconsistent with each other? And does not such affirmation become impudently absurd when coupled with the other affirmation, from the same mouth, that those who did the two things alleged to be inconsistent, understood whether they really were inconsistent better than we—better than he who affirms that they are inconsistent?

"It is surely safe to assume that the thirty-nine framers of the original Constitution, and the seventy-six members of the Congress which framed the amendments thereto, taken together, do certainly include those who may be fairly called 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live.' And so assuming, I defy any man to show that any one of them ever, in his whole life, declared that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. I go a step further. I defy any one to show that any living man in the whole world ever did, prior to the beginning of the present century (and I might almost say prior to the beginning of the last half

of the present century), declare that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. To those who now so declare I give not only 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live,' but with them all other living men within the century in which it was framed, among whom to search, and they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them.

"Now, and here, let me guard a little against being misunderstood. I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so would be to discard all the lights of current experience—to reject all progress, all improvement. What I do say is that if we would supplant the opinions and policy of our fathers in any case, we should do so upon evidence so conclusive, and argument so clear, that even their great authority, fairly considered and weighed, cannot stand; and most surely not in a case whereof we ourselves declare they understood the question better than we.

"If any man at this day sincerely believes that a proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbids the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so, and to enforce his position by all truthful evidence and fair argument which he can. But he has no right to mislead others, who have less access to history, and less leisure to study it, into the false belief that 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live' were of the same opinion—thus substituting falsehood and deception for truthful evidence and fair argument. If any man at this day

sincerely believes 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live' used and applied principles, in other cases, which ought to have led them to understand that a proper division of local from Federal authority, or some part of the Constitution, forbids the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so. But he should, at the same time, brave the responsibility of declaring that, in his opinion, he understands their principles better than they did themselves; and especially should he not shirk that responsibility by asserting that they 'understood the question just as well, and even better, than we do now.'

"But enough! Let all who believe that 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live understood this question just as well, and even better than we do now,' speak as they spoke, and act as they acted upon it. This is all Republicans ask—all Republicans desire—in relation to slavery. As those fathers marked it, so let it be again marked, as an evil not to be extended, but to be tolerated and protected only because of and so far as its actual presence among us makes that toleration and protection a necessity. Let all the guaranties those fathers gave it be not grudgingly, but fully and fairly, maintained. For this Republicans contend, and with this, so far as I know or believe, they will be content.

"And now, if they would listen,—as I suppose they will not,—I would address a few words to the Southern people.

"I would say to them: You consider yourselves a reasonable and a just people; and I consider that in the general qualities of reason and justice you are not inferior to any other people. Still when you speak of us

Republicans, you do so only to denounce us as reptiles, or, at the best, as no better than outlaws. You will grant a hearing to pirates or murderers, but nothing like it to 'Black Republicans.' In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemnation of 'Black Republicanism' as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensable prerequisite—license, so to speak—among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all. Now can you or not be prevailed upon to pause and to consider whether this is quite just to us, or even to yourselves? Bring forward your charges and specifications, and then be patient long enough to hear us deny or justify.

"You say we are sectional. We deny it. That makes an issue; and the burden of proof is upon you. You produce your proof; and what is it? Why, that our party has no existence in your section—gets no votes in your section. The fact is substantially true; but does it prove the issue? If it does, then in case we should, without change of principle, begin to get votes in your section, we should thereby cease to be sectional. You cannot escape this conclusion; and yet, are you willing to abide by it? If you are, you will probably soon find that we have ceased to be sectional, for we shall get votes in your section this very year. You will then begin to discover, as the truth plainly is, that your proof does not touch the issue. The fact that we get no votes in your section is a fact of your making, and not of ours. And if there be fault in that fact, that fault is primarily yours, and remains so until you show that we repel you by some wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours; but this brings you to

where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our principle. If our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section for the benefit of ours, or for any other object, then our principle, and we with it, are sectional, and are justly opposed and denounced as such. Meet us, then, on the question of whether our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section; and so meet us as if it were possible that something may be said on our side. Do you accept the challenge? No! Then you really believe that the principle which 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live' thought so clearly right as to adopt it, and indorse it again and again, upon their official oaths, is in fact so clearly wrong as to demand your condemnation without a moment's consideration.

"Some of you delight to flaunt in our faces the warning against sectional parties given by Washington in his Farewell Address. Less than eight years before Washington gave that warning, he had, as President of the United States, approved and signed an act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory, which act embodied the policy of the government upon that subject up to and at the very moment he penned that warning; and about one year after he penned it, he wrote Lafayette that he considered that prohibition a wise measure, expressing in the same connection his hope that we should at some time have a confederacy of free States.

"Bearing this in mind, and seeing that sectionalism has since arisen upon this same subject, is that warning a weapon in your hands against us, or in our hands against you? Could Washington himself speak, would he cast the blame of that sectionalism upon us, who

sustain his policy, or upon you who repudiate it? We respect that warning of Washington, and we commend it to you, together with his example pointing to the right application of it.

"But you say you are conservative—eminently conservative—while we are revolutionary, destructive, or something of the sort. What is conservatism? Is it not adherence to the old and tried, against the new and untried? We stick to, contend for, the identical old policy on the point in controversy which was adopted by 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live'; while you with one accord reject, and scout, and spit upon that old policy, and insist upon substituting something new. True, you disagree among yourselves as to what that substitute shall be. You are divided on new propositions and plans, but you are unanimous in rejecting and denouncing the old policy of the fathers. Some of you are for reviving the foreign slave-trade; some for a congressional slave code for the Territories; some for Congress forbidding the Territories to prohibit slavery in the Territories through the judiciary; some for the 'gur-reat pur-rinciple' that 'if one man would enslave another, no third man should object,' fantastically called 'popular sovereignty'; but never a man among you is in favor of Federal prohibition of slavery in Federal Territories, according to the practice of 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live.' Not one of all your various plans can show a precedent or an advocate in the century within which our government originated. Consider, then, whether your claim of conservatism for yourselves, and your charge of destructiveness against us, are based on the most clear and stable foundations.

"Again, you say we have made the slavery question more prominent than it formerly was. We deny it. We admit that it is more prominent, but we deny that we made it so. It was not we, but you, who discarded the old policy of the fathers. We resisted, and still resist, your innovation; and thence comes the greater prominence of the question. Would you have that question reduced to its former proportions? Go back to that old policy. What has been will be again, under the same conditions. If you would have the peace of the old times, readopt the precepts and policy of the old times.

"You charge that we stir up insurrections among your slaves. We deny it; and what is your proof? 'Harper's Ferry! John Brown!' John Brown was no Republican; and you have failed to implicate a single Republican in his Harper's Ferry enterprise. If any member of our party is guilty in that matter, you know it, or you do not know it. If you do know it, you are inexcusable for not designating the man and proving the fact. If you do not know it, you are inexcusable for asserting it, and especially for persisting in the assertion after you have tried and failed to make the proof. You need not be told that persisting in a charge which one does not know to be true, is simply malicious slander.

"Some of you admit that no Republican designedly aided or encouraged the Harper's Ferry affair, but still insist that our doctrines and declarations necessarily lead to such results. We do not believe it. We know we hold no doctrine, and make no declaration, which were not held to and made by 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live.' You never dealt fairly by us in relation to this affair. When it

occurred, some important State elections were near at hand, and you were in evident glee with the belief that, by charging the blame upon us, you could get an advantage of us in those elections. The elections came, and your expectations were not quite fulfilled. Every Republican man knew that, as to himself at least, your charge was a slander, and he was not much inclined by it to cast his vote in your favor. Republican doctrines and declarations are accompanied with a continual protest against any interference whatever with your slaves, or with you about your slaves. Surely this does not encourage them to revolt. True, we do, in common with 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live,' declare our belief that slavery is wrong; but the slaves do not hear us declare even this. For anything we say or do, the slaves would scarcely know there is a Republican party. I believe they would not, in fact, generally know it but for your misrepresentations of us in their hearing. In your political contests among yourselves, each faction charges the other with sympathy with Black Republicanism; and then, to give point to the charge, defines Black Republicanism to simply be insurrection, blood, and thunder among the slaves.

"Slave insurrections are no more common now than they were before the Republican party was organized. What induced the Southampton insurrection, twenty-eight years ago, in which at least three times as many lives were lost as at Harper's Ferry? You can scarcely stretch your very elastic fancy to the conclusion that Southampton was 'got up by Black Republicanism.' In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general, or even a very extensive, slave insurrection is possible. The indispensable concert of

action cannot be attained. The slaves have no means of rapid communication; nor can incendiary freemen, black or white, supply it. The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels; but there neither are, nor can be supplied, the indispensable connecting trains.

"Much is said by Southern people about the affection of slaves for their masters and mistresses; and a part of it, at least, is true. A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the life of a favorite master or mistress, would divulge it. This is the rule, and the slave revolution in Hayti was not an exception to it, but a case occurring under peculiar circumstances. The gunpowder plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point. In that case, only about twenty were admitted to the secret; and yet one of them, in his anxiety to save a friend, betrayed the plot to that friend, and, by consequence, averted the calamity. Occasional poisonings from the kitchen, and open or stealthy assassinations in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will continue to occur as the natural results of slavery; but no general insurrection of slaves, as I think, can happen in this country for a long time. Whoever much fears, or much hopes, for such an event, will be alike disappointed.

"In the language of Mr. Jefferson, uttered many years ago, 'It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably, and in such slow degrees, as that the evil will wear off insensibly; and their places be, *pari passu*, filled up by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up.'

"Mr. Jefferson did not mean to say, nor do I, that the power of emancipation is in the Federal Government. He spoke of Virginia; and, as to the power of emancipation, I speak of the slave-holding States only. The Federal Government, however, as we insist, has the power of restraining the extension of the institution—the power to insure that a slave insurrection shall never occur on any American soil which is now free from slavery.

"John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon, and John Brown's attempt at Harper's Ferry, were, in their philosophy, precisely the same. The eagerness to cast blame on old England in the one case, and on New England in the other, does not disprove the sameness of the two things.

"And how much would it avail you, if you could, by the use of John Brown, Helper's Book, and the like break up the Republican organization? Human action can be modified to some extent, but human nature cannot be changed. There is a judgment and a feeling against slavery in this nation, which cast at least a million and a half of votes. You cannot destroy that judgment and feeling—that sentiment—by breaking

up the political organization which rallies around it. You can scarcely scatter and disperse an army which has been formed into order in the face of your heaviest fire; but if you could, how much would you gain by forcing the sentiment which created it out of the peaceful channel of the ballot-box into some other channel? What would that other channel probably be? Would the number of John Browns be lessened or enlarged by the operation?

"But you will break up the Union rather than submit to a denial of your constitutional rights.

"That has a somewhat reckless sound; but it would be palliated, if not fully justified, were we proposing, by the mere force of numbers, to deprive you of some right plainly written down in the Constitution. But we are proposing no such thing.

"When you make these declarations you have a specific and well-understood allusion to an assumed constitutional right of yours to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. But no such right is specifically written in the Constitution. That instrument is literally silent about any such right. We, on the contrary, deny that such a right has any existence in the Constitution, even by implication.

"Your purpose, then, plainly stated, is that you will destroy the government, unless you be allowed to construe and force the Constitution as you please, on all points in dispute between you and us. You will rule or ruin in all events.

"This, plainly stated, is your language. Perhaps you will say the Supreme Court has decided the disputed constitutional question in your favor. Not quite so. But waiving the lawyer's distinction between dic-

tum and decision, the court has decided the question for you in a sort of way. The court has substantially said, it is your constitutional right to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. When I say the decision was made in a sort of way, I mean it was made in a divided court, by a bare majority of the judges, and they not quite agreeing with one another in the reasons for making it; that it is so made as that its avowed supporters disagree with one another about its meaning, and that it was mainly based upon a mistaken statement of fact—the statement in the opinion that 'the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution.'

"An inspection of the Constitution will show that the right of property in a slave is not 'distinctly and expressly affirmed' in it. Bear in mind, the judges do not pledge their judicial opinion that such right is impliedly affirmed in the Constitution; but they pledge their veracity that it is 'distinctly and expressly' affirmed there—'distinctly,' that is, not mingled with anything else—'expressly,' that is, in words meaning just that, without the aid of any inference, and susceptible of no other meaning.

"If they had only pledged their judicial opinion that such right is affirmed in the instrument by implication, it would be open to others to show that neither the word 'slave' nor 'slavery' is to be found in the Constitution, nor the word 'property' even, in any connection with language alluding to the things slave or slavery; and that wherever in that instrument the slave is alluded to, he is called a 'person'; and wherever his master's legal right in relation to him is alluded to, it is spoken of as 'service or labor which may be

due'—as a debt payable in service or labor. Also it would be open to show, by contemporaneous history, that this mode of alluding to slaves and slavery, instead of speaking of them, was employed on purpose to exclude from the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.

"To show all this is easy and certain.

"When this obvious mistake of the judges shall be brought to their notice, is it not reasonable to expect that they will withdraw the mistaken statement, and reconsider the conclusion based upon it?

"And then it is to be remembered that 'our fathers who framed the government under which we live'—the men who made the Constitution—decided this same constitutional question in our favor long ago: decided it without division among themselves when making the decision; without division among themselves about the meaning of it after it was made, and, so far as any evidence is left, without basing it upon any mistaken statement of facts.

"Under all these circumstances, do you really feel yourselves justified to break up this government unless such a court decision as yours is shall be at once submitted to as a conclusive and final rule of political action? But you will not abide the election of a Republican president! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us. That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, 'Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!'

"To be sure, what the robber demanded of me—my money—was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my

own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction of the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle.

"A few words now to Republicans. It is exceedingly desirable that all parts of this great Confederacy shall be at peace, and in harmony one with another. Let us Republicans do our part to have it so. Even though much provoked, let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. Even though the Southern people will not so much as listen to us, let us calmly consider their demands, and yield to them if, in our deliberate view of our duty, we possibly can. Judging by all they say and do, and by the subject and nature of their controversy with us, let us determine, if we can, what will satisfy them.

"Will they be satisfied if the Territories be unconditionally surrendered to them? We know they will not. In all their present complaints against us, the Territories are scarcely mentioned. Invasions and insurrections are the rage now. Will it satisfy them if, in the future, we have nothing to do with invasions and insurrections? We know it will not. We so know, because we know we never had anything to do with invasions and insurrections; and yet this total abstaining does not exempt us from the charge and the denunciation.

"The question recurs, What will satisfy them? Simply this: we must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone. This, we know by experience, is no easy task. We have been so trying to convince them from the very beginning of our organization, but with no success. In all our platforms and speeches we have constantly pro-

tested our purpose to let them alone; but this has had no tendency to convince them. Alike unavailing to convince them is the fact that they have never detected a man of us in any attempt to disturb them.

"These natural and apparently adequate means all failing, what will convince them? This, and this only: cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right. And this must be done thoroughly—done in acts as well as in words. Silence will not be tolerated —we must place ourselves avowedly with them. Senator Douglas's new sedition law must be enacted and enforced, suppressing all declarations that slavery is wrong, whether made in politics, in presses, in pulpits, or in private. We must arrest and return fugitive slaves with greedy pleasure. We must pull down our free-State constitutions. The whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery, before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.

"I am quite aware they do not state their case precisely in this way. Most of them would probably say to us, 'Let us alone; do nothing to us, and say what you please about slavery.' But we do let them alone, —have never disturbed them,—so that, after all, it is what we say which dissatisfies them. They will continue to accuse us of doing, until we cease saying.

"I am also aware they have not as yet in terms demanded the overthrow of our free-State constitutions. Yet those constitutions declare the wrong of slavery with more solemn emphasis than do all other sayings against it; and when all these other sayings shall have been silenced, the overthrow of these constitutions will be demanded, and nothing be left to resist the demand. It is nothing to the contrary that they do not demand

the whole of this just now. Demanding what they do, and for the reason they do, they can voluntarily stop nowhere short of this consummation. Holding, as they do, that slavery is morally right and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it as a legal right and a social blessing.

"Nor can we justifiably withhold this on any ground save our conviction that slavery is wrong. If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nationality,—its universality; if it is wrong, they cannot justly insist upon its extension—its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right; all we ask they could as readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their view, and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and political responsibilities, can we do this?

"Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national Territories, and to overrun us here in these free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored—contrivances

such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong: vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man; such as a policy of 'don't care' on a question about which all true men do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance; such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

"Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

Holland, who wrote only five years after the delivery of this speech, says concerning it:

"The papers of the city were full of his address and with comments upon it the next day. The Illinois lawyer was a lion. Critics read the speech, and marvelled at its pure and compact English, its felicity of statement and its faultless logic. It was read during the day not only by New York but by nearly all New England."

Greeley wrote of Lincoln's Cooper Institute speech:

"I do not hesitate to pronounce Mr. Lincoln's speech at Cooper Institute at New York in the spring of 1860 the very best political address to which I have ever listened, and I have heard some of Webster's grandest. As a literary effort it would not of course bear comparison with many of Webster's speeches; but regarded simply as an effort to convince the largest possible number that they ought to be on the speaker's

side, and not on the other, I do not hesitate to pronounce it unsurpassed."

Shortly thereafter he made a tour through New England, speaking in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. His tour was a continued triumph, and doubtless had much to do with his nomination for the presidency at Chicago in the following June.

The other day I met my old friend, General Robert P. Kennedy of Bellefontaine, Ohio. In 1860 he was a student at Yale College, New Haven, and heard Mr. Lincoln make his great speech in that city. He told me what a wonderful impression the speech made upon him as a college youth, and how distinctly he remembered a few of the sentences of that speech, which are not contained in the official report, but which I have no doubt Abraham Lincoln delivered, because the language and thought is so clearly Lincolnesque.

"I hold this truth to be self evident: What is right in Connecticut is right in South Carolina. What is wrong in Connecticut is wrong in South Carolina. I hold human slavery to be wrong in Connecticut and I hold human slavery to be wrong, eternally wrong, in South Carolina."

CHAPTER XIX

LINCOLN'S FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

THE time—1 P. M., March 4, 1861. The place—east portico of Capitol, Washington, D. C. The assemblage—President Buchanan, judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, United States senators, members of the House of Representatives, governors of the States, foreign ambassadors and diplomats, heads of governmental departments, and a great crowd of political admirers and adversaries gathered to see and hear the new President of the United States.

Three of the nation's most distinguished men representing the three great departments of the government stood in the foreground of this immortal assemblage: Abraham Lincoln, the chief executive elect, Roger B. Taney, the chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, Stephen A. Douglas, a leading member of the United States Senate and defeated Democratic candidate for the presidency of the United States, standing at Lincoln's side, holding his hat.

We are reminded here of 1858 when these same three persons were in the limelight of the political arena, not because conditions are the same, but, upon the contrary, because they are so different. Then Douglas was the victor, Lincoln the vanquished; Taney, through the Dred Scott decision, vindicated. To-day, Douglas was the vanquished, Lincoln the victor, and Taney was regretfully administering the

oath of office to the new President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois.

Surely, the wheel of fate had pitilessly reversed the order of things in two and a half short years.

The oath being administered, Lincoln began his remarkable inaugural address. But a few preliminary words should be written before we are ready for this address.

Lincoln's mental make-up, with his experience as a lawyer and party leader, required him first of all to make a survey of the whole national situation, as it would present itself to him on the 4th of March, 1861. This he proceeded to do shortly after the election.

What was to be the policy of the new administration with reference to the political situation in which the new President would find himself upon taking the reins of power?

Again we see Lincoln taking his compass and chain and making his survey, through his first inaugural address—an address that dwelt on the most critical and difficult situation ever presented to an incoming President, whose sceptre of power was to be delayed for four months following his election. In the meantime one political complication after another was developing as fast as the daily press could record it.

It will be interesting for the reader to know that that inaugural address, save the concluding paragraphs, was Lincoln's own. He prepared it in Springfield without assistance or consultation from either personal friend or political adviser.

Herndon, his law partner, furnishes the following very interesting account of the preparation of that address:*

* Herndon, vol. II, p. 188.

"When, therefore, he began on his inaugural speech (late in January) he told me what works he intended to consult. I looked for a long list, but when he went over it I was greatly surprised. He asked me to furnish him with Henry Clay's great speech delivered in 1850; Andrew Jackson's proclamation against Nullification; and a copy of the Constitution. He afterwards called for Webster's reply to Hayne, a speech which he read when he lived at New Salem, and which he always regarded as the grandest specimen of American oratory. With these few 'volumes,' and no further sources of reference, he locked himself up in a room upstairs over a store across the street from the State House, and there, cut off from all communication and intrusion, he prepared the address. Though composed amid the unromantic surroundings of a dingy, dusty, and neglected back room, the speech has become a memorable document. Posterity will assign to it a high rank among historical utterances; and it will ever bear comparison with the efforts of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, or any that preceded its delivery from the steps of the national Capitol."

Once upon a time Herndon was asked what, if anything, he had to do with the preparation of that address, to which he replied:

"You don't understand Mr. Lincoln. No man ever asked less aid than he; his confidence in his own ability to meet the requirements of every hour was so marked that his friends never thought of tendering their aid, and therefore no one could share his responsibilities. I never wrote a line for him; he never asked me to. I was never conscious of having exerted any influence over him. He often called out my views on some philosophical question, simply because I was a fond student

of philosophy, and conceding that I had given the subject more attention than he; he often asked as to the use of a word or the turn of a sentence, but if I volunteered to recommend or even suggest a change of language which involved a change of sentiment I found him the most inflexible man I have ever seen."

The first inaugural address is as follows:

"*Fellow-Citizens of the United States:* In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States to be taken by the President before he enters on the execution of his office.

"I do not consider it necessary at present for me to discuss those matters of administration about which there is no special anxiety or excitement.

"Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.' Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them.

"And, more than this, they placed in the platform

for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

"'*Resolved*, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend, and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes.'

"I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming administration. I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause—as cheerfully to one section as to another.

"There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

"'No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.'

"It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of

what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the lawgiver is the law. All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution—to this provision as much as to any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause 'shall be delivered up,' their oaths are unanimous. Now, if they would make the effort in good temper, could they not with nearly equal unanimity frame and pass a law by means of which to keep good that unanimous oath?

"There is some difference of opinion whether this clause should be enforced by national or by State authority; but surely that difference is not a very material one. If the slave is to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him or to others by which authority it is done. And should any one in any case be content that his oath shall go unkept on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to how it shall be kept?

"Again, in any law upon this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced, so that a freeman be not, in any case, surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well at the same time to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause in the Constitution which guarantees that 'the citizen of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States'?

"I take the official oath to-day with no mental reservations, and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules. And while I do not choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest that it will be much safer for all, both in official and private stations, to conform to and abide by all those acts which

stand unrepealed, than to violate any of them, trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

"It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a President under our National Constitution. During that period fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens have, in succession, administered the executive branch of the government. They have conducted it through many perils, and generally with great success. Yet, with all this scope of precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted.

"I hold that, in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination.

"Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure forever—it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

"Again, if the United States be not a government proper, but an association of States in the nature of contract merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak; but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it?

"Descending from these general principles, we find the proposition that, in legal contemplation, the Union is perpetual confirmed by the history of the Union

itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And, finally, in 1787 one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was 'to form a more perfect Union.'

"But if the destruction of the Union by one or by a part only of the States be lawfully possible, the Union is less perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

"It follows from these views that no State upon its own mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence, within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances.

"I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken; and to the extent of my ability I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself.

"In doing this there needs to be no bloodshed or violence; and there shall be none, unless it be forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere. Where hostility to the United States, in any interior locality, shall be so great and universal as to prevent competent resident citizens from holding the Federal offices, there will be no attempt to force obnoxious strangers among the people for that object. While the strict legal right may exist in the government to enforce the exercise of these offices, the attempt to do so would be so irritating, and so nearly impracticable withal, that I deem it better to forego for the time the uses of such offices.

"The mails, unless repelled, will continue to be furnished in all parts of the Union. So far as possible, the people everywhere shall have that sense of perfect security which is most favorable to calm thought and reflection. The course here indicated will be followed unless current events and experience shall show a modification or change to be proper, and in every case and exigency my best discretion will be exercised according to circumstances actually existing; and with a view and a hope of a peaceful solution of the national troubles and the restoration of fraternal sympathies and affections.

"That there are persons in one section or another who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm nor deny; but if there be such, I need address no word to

them. To those, however, who really love the Union may I not speak?

"Before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruction of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes, would it not be wise to ascertain precisely why we do it? Will you hazard so desperate a step while there is any possibility that any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence? Will you, while the certain ills you fly to are greater than all the real ones you fly from—will you risk the commission of so fearful a mistake?

"All profess to be content in the Union if all constitutional rights can be maintained. Is it true, then, that any right, plainly written in the Constitution, has been denied? I think not. Happily the human mind is so constituted that no party can reach to the audacity of doing this. Think, if you can, of a single instance in which a plainly written provision of the Constitution has ever been denied. If by the mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority of any clearly written constitutional right, it might, in a moral point of view, justify revolution—certainly would if such a right were a vital one. But such is not our case. All the vital rights of minorities and of individuals are so plainly assured to them by affirmations and negations, guarantees and prohibitions, in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them. But no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every question which may occur in practical administration. No foresight can anticipate, nor any document of reasonable length contain, express provisions for all possible questions. Shall fugitives from labor be surrendered by national or by State authority? The Constitution

does not expressly say. May Congress prohibit slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. Must Congress protect slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say.

"From questions of this class spring all our constitutional controversies, and we divide upon them into majorities and minorities. If the minority will not acquiesce, the majority must, or the government must cease. There is no other alternative; for continuing the government is acquiescence on one side or the other.

"If a minority in such case will secede rather than acquiesce, they make a precedent which in turn will divide and ruin them; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority. For instance, why may not any portion of a new confederacy a year or two hence arbitrarily secede again, precisely as a portion of the present Union now claim to secede from it? All who cherish disunion sentiments are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this.

"Is there such perfect identity of interests among the States to compose a new Union, as to produce harmony only, and prevent renewed secession?

"Plainly, the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

"I do not forget the position, assumed by some, that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme Court; nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding, in any case, upon the parties to a suit, as to the object of that suit, while they are also entitled to very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the government. And while it is obviously possible that such decision may be erroneous in any given case, still the evil effect following it, being limited to that particular case, with the chance that it may be overruled and never become a precedent for other cases, can better be borne than could the evils of a different practice.

"At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal. Nor is there in this view any assault upon the court or the judges. It is a duty from which they may not shrink to decide cases properly brought before them, and it is no fault of theirs if others seek to turn their decisions to political purposes.

"One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution, and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave-trade, are each as well enforced, perhaps, as any law can ever be in a community where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports

the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal obligation in both cases, and a few break over in each. This, I think, cannot be perfectly cured; and it would be worse in both cases after the separation of the sections than before. The foreign slave-trade, now imperfectly suppressed, would be ultimately revived, without restriction, in one section, while fugitive slaves, now only partially surrendered, would not be surrendered at all by the other.

"Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

"This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of

amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. I will venture to add that to me the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take or reject propositions originated by others not specially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the Federal Government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconstruction of what I have said, I depart from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express and irrevocable.

"The chief magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this also if they choose; but the executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences

is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

"By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

"My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war.

The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend it.'

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chord of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Here was the chart for the sailing of the ship of state under its new captain, Abraham Lincoln.

It is a model for clearness, consistency, patience, and patriotism, even in temper and exact in justice to South no less than North.

He contended that the South had neither constitutional right nor consistent reason for attempting to secede and organize an independent government.

And yet, he did not speak of "treason" or "rebellion" or any other words that might fan the flames of sectional hate. Its effect upon the North and upon the border States was most favorable, but in the South it was received with taunts and jeers.

Greeley's New York *Tribune* said, March 5:

"It is marked by no feeble expression. He who runs may read it and to twenty millions of people it will carry the tidings, good or not, as the case may be, that the Federal government of the United States is still in existence with a man at the head of it."

After all, the address itself must be read and reread and studied and restudied to see and sense its clear-

ness of statement, calmness, and the conclusiveness of its course of reasoning.

The South, however, had gotten beyond the realm of reason. Its leaders had fanned it into a fury, hot with hate.

With what delicacy and tenderness Lincoln treats them in his final appeal for the Union.

Lincoln's fame as statesman and patriot may well rest upon his first inaugural address.

CHAPTER XX

LINCOLN THE LEADER

"He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." —II Sam. 24 : 3.

Our own experience, confirmed by the records of history, demonstrate that leaders are born, not made. Men and birds and beasts, indeed almost all living creatures, have their leaders, and in most cases they lead because they are the best qualified to lead. This is peculiarly true as to the leaders of public thought.

Evidences of Lincoln's leadership appeared at a comparatively early date. The children of the neighborhood looked to him to furnish their entertainment by speech or story. The grown-ups looked upon him as a boy of unusual education, in that he could write and write well, and accordingly they called upon him to attend to much of their correspondence, for writing in that day was a rather unusual accomplishment in his community.

In all the games in which he was not a participant for honors, from a boxing or wrestling match to a horse race, he was always chosen as referee, umpire, judge. Such was his universal reputation for fairness and fearlessness that his judgments and decisions were rarely, if ever, questioned.

His great physical strength, his skill with the maul and the ax and the scythe, gave him front rank in every community in which he lived as boy and youth. These qualities at that age were peculiarly marks of excellence and superiority.

Unusual respect and even veneration was paid his physical powers, as well as his mental capacity. He was a helper to every one that was in need, from the humblest housewife to the biggest farmer in the community, with a gentleness, a kindness, a gratitude not ordinarily found in giants. He was friend of everybody and enemy of nobody. Even as a boy it could well be said of him that he always had "charity for all and malice toward none."

The "people" at Gentryville, the "folks" at New Salem, all seemed to see in this boy and youth one of their own kind. He was born of them, and among them, and in some way or other he just seemed to "belong." He emulated their virtues, eschewed their vices, and yet maintained the respect and good-will of all.

We remember how he was chosen captain in the Black Hawk War in 1832 over an older and more experienced man, Kilpatrick. The people did it. They believed in him and wanted to honor him.

We remember how, though a Whig, he was appointed postmaster at New Salem in 1833 by President Jackson, a Democrat, because the people wanted him and generally recommended him.

We remember how he rose to leadership in the general assembly of Illinois, so that he was the unanimous choice of his party for speaker of the House in 1838 and again in 1840. He was recognized as the Whig party leader of Illinois in the national campaign of 1840, 1844, and 1848, indeed in almost every national campaign until the death of the Whig party.

It has been said that all this recognition of leadership on the part of Lincoln in early life, as well as later, was unconscious and unsought so far as Lincoln was

concerned. We deceive ourselves and misrepresent Lincoln. There have been few men in our American life more ambitious than he.

The first reference that he makes to his political ambition was in his first circular at twenty-three years of age, when he became a candidate for the first time for member of the Illinois House of Representatives. You will remember what he said in the circular. It will bear repetition here in this chapter:

"Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed."

In 1854, in one of his great speeches, he said:

"Twenty-two years ago, Judge Douglas and I first became acquainted. We were both young then—he a trifle younger than I. Even then we were both ambitious,—I, perhaps quite as much so as he. With me, the race of ambition has been a failure—a flat failure; with him, it has been one of splendid success. His name fills the nation, and is not unknown even in foreign lands. I affect no contempt for the high eminence he has reached. So reached that the oppressed of my species might have shared with me in the elevation, I would rather stand on that eminence than wear the richest crown that ever pressed a monarch's brow."

This high and honorable ambition upon the part of Abraham Lincoln "of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men by rendering myself worthy of their esteem," should be the motive power of more men in the public service to-day.

There is a lot of human nature about most of us. Some have more than others. Lincoln was of this latter type. He knew the average man better than the average man knew himself, and he always seemed to take that average man's view-point, that is his best view-point, his noblest view-point, and then he would present his view in such a simple straightforward manner that the average citizen would adopt it much in surprise that Lincoln had only presented his auditor's own view of things after all; therefore, being the auditor's own, it must be correct. For 'tis with our judgments as with our watches: "None go just alike, but each believes his own."

It has been said that consistency is the plea of the small mind. That contains the half of a truth and the whole of a lie.

Lincoln himself asserted the right and the duty of changing his mind whenever he found that he was wrong; nevertheless, in following the course of his life from its Lake Itasca down to the great Gulf, we find a consistency, a sincerity, a straightforwardness of the current that is astonishing. True, he is human enough to present now and then a trifling, a temporary departure, but in the substance of things, in the essentials of each day's duties, in his conduct toward his fellow men, his fellow lawyers, his fellow statesmen, the Lincoln of Gentryville, Indiana, of New Salem, Illinois, of Springfield, Illinois, was the same Lincoln at Washington, D. C., always animated by a "passion for justice," the achievement of which was the goal of his life, and to which he was as true as the magnet to the pole.

I have already discussed at considerable length "his passion for justice," in a previous chapter devoted

to that element of his character. That dominating element, unaffected, uniform, unchanged and unchanging all through his life was recognized as much a part of "Honest Abe," as were his arms and legs.

This abiding confidence of the people in his judgment, in his sincerity, in his honesty, coupled with the fact that he spoke their simple speech, gave him tremendous persuasive power in moulding their judgment and their action.

His understanding of the understanding of the twelve men in the jury-box effectively equipped him to understand the understanding of the larger jury at the ballot-box.

We have noticed with what diligence Lincoln continued the practice of law after his return from Congress in 1849, until the campaign of 1854. By common consent of his fellow lawyers, a rather unusual thing, he was easily the leader of the Illinois bar, at least of the eighth circuit.

We have seen that leadership recognized by his frequent choice of his fellow lawyers to preside in the trial of cases in the absence of the regular judge, a most unusual honor and recognition of leadership, for there were giants in those days. But Lincoln not merely physically, but mentally, was the master of them all. The people believed it and the lawyers of his day generally admitted it.

One thousand eight hundred and fifty-four marked a new crisis in the politics of the nation upon the one great disturbing question—slavery, which was thrown into the foreground of the political stage by the passage of Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska Bill.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 said save and, except the State of Missouri, there should be no slavery

in the national territory north of 36° 30′; the Kansas-Nebraska bill said you can have slavery in Kansas and Nebraska if you choose. It was Douglas's bid for the support of the South, and indicated to Lincoln unmistakably the purpose to bring about the further spread of slavery. It was to him a new call to arms in behalf of liberty and democracy, and we find him in the campaign of that year for the senatorship. He was the unanimous candidate of the Whig party, and while they had a plurality of the legislature, they did not have a majority. There were sufficient anti-Nebraska Democrats to prevent an election. Their candidate was Lyman Trumbull. Rather than see the election of a senator of pro-slavery views, Lincoln magnanimously withdrew and urged his party followers and friends to go to the support of Trumbull, who, while he had but few votes, with Lincoln's many votes, could be elected. Again Lincoln demonstrated his leadership in a great cause, though it meant for the time being his own defeat.

In 1856 the Republican party was organized in Illinois at a convention held in Bloomington, at which Lincoln made one of the greatest speeches of his life. Indeed, so absorbed and entranced were the newspaper men who were present, that they forgot to take notes during the progress of the speech and found themselves, at its close, with only a memory of his splendid triumph. Lincoln himself had no manuscript, and hence this great speech has become known as the "Lost Speech" of Lincoln.

Lincoln's wonderful address before the Republican Convention of 1856 established him at once as the Republican leader of Illinois. Though not at the Republican National Convention, held the same year

at Philadelphia, he received in that convention 110 votes for the vice-presidency of the United States as against William L. Dayton of New Jersey, the successful nominee. This fact is worthy of mention, because many of us have been taught to believe that even in 1860, two years after the great debate with Douglas in 1858, Lincoln was wholly unknown to the country and to the leaders of his party.

His leadership in the debate with Douglas in 1858, one of the great political and forensic battles upon the great issue of slavery, had been widely discussed by the press of the nation. Later, his speeches in Kansas, in Ohio, in New York, and in New England had invited, yes, compelled, attention to this coming man with his simplicity of manner, his strength of mind, his persuasive power upon the platform, and his fitness for party leadership.

That Lincoln himself looked forward to future leadership there can be no doubt.

The fact that he overruled all his personal and political friends on the first paragraph of his great Springfield speech demonstrated not only the firmness of his convictions, the soundness of his judgment, but that he was steering his ship of state for some great future political sea.

An interesting incident in the Lincoln-Douglas debate illustrating Lincoln's leadership occurred at Freeport. He had written out a number of questions to be submitted to Senator Douglas for an answer, among which was the following:

"Can the people of a United States Territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State constitution?"

The reader is no doubt aware that the Dred Scott decision, as it has become popularly known, was the basis of many great political arguments in the years 1857, 1858, 1859, and 1860. The effect of the decision was that a slave was property, and that any citizen could take any of his property into any Territory of the United States, and that the Constitution of the Union would protect him there in the possession, use, and enjoyment of such property.

This now being a federal law by virtue of the Dred Scott case, a Territory either by act of Congress or by its local legislature could not in any wise impair or defeat that right. Hence, the pertinency of this question.

Before submitting the question to Senator Douglas, it was carefully written out by Lincoln and submitted to a number of his friends in order to obtain their judgment as to the wisdom of putting it to Senator Douglas at the Freeport debate. They were unanimously against the question.

They urged that Douglas would answer it in the affirmative and that that answer would cost Lincoln the senatorship. Lincoln overruled them, as he had done with reference to their judgment on the opening paragraph of the Springfield speech heretofore referred to, and in ignoring the advice and counsel of his friends he said:

"I am after larger game. The battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this."

The question was put as written out by Lincoln. Douglas answered in the affirmative and gave as his reason "unfriendly legislation by the local legislature."

A parrot will repeat what she heard her master say yesterday, a philosopher will diagnose the sayings and

doings of to-day, but it is only a prophet who can forecast what will happen in the to-morrows.

Lincoln put this question to Douglas, not to beat Douglas for the senatorship, but to beat him for the presidency. No, on second thought I think this is an injustice to Lincoln. I don't think he had in mind any person's triumph or defeat, but rather the greater question, the triumph or defeat of a great human cause. He saw with almost divine prescience that Douglas's answer to that question would place him at once in square and irreconcilable conflict with the great Democratic party of the South, and one of two things must happen to Douglas: he would either lose their support for the nomination of President or the election of President.

Solomon has said:

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

And Isaiah has spoken about the essential qualities of vision in the following words:

"They err in vision; they stumble in judgment."

Lincoln's vision was well-nigh divine, but it was arrived at by the orderly processes of his own mind, applying the principle of causation to conditions and forces as they are to-day, with a view of predetermining their effects to-morrow and next year.

So he stood firm, almost obstinately, for the opening paragraph of the Springfield speech and for the question put to Douglas in the Freeport debate.

He had vision, and, therefore, he did not "stumble in judgment."

Lincoln was right. Douglas won the senatorship, but his, after all, was only a Pyrrhic victory. Herndon relates that upon the aggregate vote cast for members of the legislature Lincoln beat Douglas by some four

thousand votes, but that owing to the partisan formation of the legislative districts Douglas had the majority of the legislative vote.

Though the victor in the senatorship fight in Illinois, Douglas's reception in Democratic circles was far less favorable than the reception accorded Abraham Lincoln, the vanquished, in Republican circles. Why? Lincoln had stood four-square for a great cause, for human liberty, not only as written in the Declaration of Independence, but to be written into the political policies of the life of the nation.

He himself says, after that debate was over and after he had been twice defeated for the United States senatorship of Illinois in 1854 and 1858 in a letter to Doctor Henry, an intimate personal and political friend:

"I am glad I made the late race. It gave me a hearing on the great and durable questions of the age which I could have had in no other way; and though I now sink out of view and shall be forgotten, I believe I have made some marks which will tell for the cause of liberty long after I am gone."

In a letter to Henry Asbury in 1858 he said:

". . . The fight must go on. The cause of civil liberty must not be surrendered at the end of one or even one hundred defeats. Douglas had the ingenuity to be supported in the late contest both as the best means to break down and to uphold the slave interest. No ingenuity can keep these antagonistic elements in harmony long. Another explosion will soon come."

Here we have the very genius of leadership, a leadership that stands for measures rather than men, for causes rather than candidates, for principles rather than persons.

This campaign to date had tested and tried Lincoln as to his capacity for political leadership in three notable instances:

1. He had followed his own judgment as to the "house divided against itself" paragraph of the Springfield speech against the advice of all of his friends.

2. He had followed his own judgment in the question that he put to Douglas in the Freeport debate, likewise against the advice of all his friends.

3. By the Freeport question to Douglas and Douglas's answer he had driven Douglas into a position upon the question of slavery so hostile to the Southern point of view that Douglas, as the Democratic nominee of 1860, became impossible so long as the South was in the saddle.

While Lincoln had lost the senatorship he had gained friends and fame throughout the country, not merely as a great debater, but as an able leader upon the great questions that were to stir this country from coast to coast in the coming national election.

This independence and self-reliance, after having carefully and conscientiously studied the whole question, was one of the marked characteristics of Abraham Lincoln. It was as true of him legally as it was true politically. His own partner, Herndon, repeatedly says that he never knew him to advise even with associate counsel as to the best course to pursue in the trial of a cause in any court. Yet he was not discourteous, but, upon the contrary, a perfect gentleman, not only with the court, but with all the counsel engaged in any cause. No member of the Springfield bar was ever treated with such uniform courtesy as was Lincoln, and the chief reason was that that was the kind of treatment he gave in return.

We shall see much of this independent judgment of Lincoln's in the following pages.

The story of the National Republican Convention held in the "Wigwam" at Chicago in 1860 is familiar to all of us. It is unnecessary to review its details.

His campaign managers were specifically instructed that there were to be no bargains for votes.

It has been questioned as to whether Judge Davis and others specifically followed this instruction.

If any departure was made from it, Mr. Lincoln never felt obligated in the least.

Lincoln was nominated upon the third ballot, which was followed by a public demonstration that had never before been witnessed in any political convention.

The people of his party were evidently with him from the start, but the leaders had grave doubts. Most of the men upon the committee who went to Springfield officially to notify Lincoln of his nomination were of the latter class. Upon the whole he made a favorable impression, however, both in their reception and by his few brief remarks. He was importuned from all quarters to take the stump in the national campaign. Here again the leader asserts himself: he positively but diplomatically declined, saying among other things the following:

"Those who will not read or heed what I have already publicly said would not heed or read a repetition of it. 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rose from the dead!'"

Many of his friends in different sections of the country wrote him personal letters containing inquiries as to this and that touching his public utterances. As

to one of these he ventured an explanation, but added this significant language:

"I have made this explanation to you as a friend, but I wish no explanation made to our enemies. What they want is a squabble and a fuss, and that they can have if we explain and they cannot have it if we don't."

The night of his election his ability to lead the people was evidenced by two facts occurring in Springfield.

1. He had decided that night at the telegraph-office upon his Cabinet substantially as finally constituted.

2. In a little speech he made to his neighbors who came to the Lincoln home to express their enthusiasm, he said:

"In all our rejoicing let us neither express nor cherish any hard feeling toward any citizen who has differed from us. Let us at all times remember that all American citizens are members of a common country and should dwell together in the bonds of fraternal feeling."

Here in these few words to his friends and neighbors was outshadowed not only Lincoln leadership, but the one great issue of his administration, to which all other issues must subordinate themselves, and that was: We are "all members of a common country." Therefore, the slogan must be "The Union—it must be preserved."

CHAPTER XXI

LINCOLN THE LEADER

(CONTINUED)

LINCOLN was, after all, a minority President. The slavery men had been confounded by divisions among them. Thereby Lincoln had saved the election; could he now save the Union? Here was the occasion and opportunity for leadership of the highest quality, and I have always felt that Lincoln's greatness in this behalf has never been fully appreciated.

We have read much and heard much about his subduing Seward, his patient handling of Chase, and his diplomatic dealing with Stanton, whom he finally brought to love him as much as Stanton could love any man.

But Lincoln's greatness appeared not merely in dealing with individual man. It was the handling of men in the mass; in short, in the moulding and managing of public opinion.

It will be remembered that in his debate with Douglas touching the importance of public opinion, he said:

"In this and like communities, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed."

Of the total vote cast for the presidency, the electoral vote in and of itself is exceedingly misleading. That

vote stood: Lincoln 180 votes, Douglas 12, Breckenridge 72, and Bell 39. But the popular vote really, after all, indexed public sentiment. That vote stood as follows: Lincoln 1,858,000, Douglas 1,366,000, Breckenridge 848,000, and Bell 591,000. The total popular vote was 4,663,000, of which Lincoln's vote was a bare forty per cent. Even in the States north of Mason and Dixon's line Lincoln was barely a majority candidate. Something had to be done at once to unify public sentiment in the North. The votes for Douglas and Bell were so numerous that substantial representation must be given to those leaders in the new administration in order to keep their followers loyal to the great cause of the Union.

His Cabinet chosen by himself, was as follows:

For secretary of state, William H. Seward, of New York; for secretary of treasury, Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio; for secretary of war, Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania; for attorney-general, Edward Bates, of Missouri; for secretary of interior, Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana; for secretary of navy, Gideon Welles, of Connecticut; for postmaster-general, Montgomery Blair, of Maryland.

No such political Cabinet had ever been chosen in this country or any other. The majority of the members had been rival candidates for the presidency in the convention that nominated Lincoln. Four of them had been former Democrats, three of them former Whigs. Some of Lincoln's Republican friends remonstrated with him against a Republican President having a Democratic Cabinet. Lincoln replied, half in jest, but more than half in wisdom, that he would ofttimes sit in the Cabinet, and that would make it stand four to four.

Not a big man in the Cabinet but believed himself bigger than the President and bigger than all the other big men in the Cabinet. If such thing were possible, each Cabinet officer distrusted the others much more than each distrusted the President. Yet each member of that Cabinet in a peculiar way represented in large measure a substantial fraction of public opinion, especially public opinion from a personal or partisan standpoint.

Lincoln's paramount object in the construction of this Cabinet was to unify public sentiment of the North so as to be able effectually to meet the united public sentiment of the South in the great crisis confronting him.

In the selection of a Cabinet two plans were open to the new President: The first, to surround himself with men of inferior loyalty who would fawn upon and flatter him and act merely as his faithful subordinates, or: second, with an official family made up of the biggest and most representative leaders of all political parties and elements from all the various sections of the country, even at the risk of eclipsing or menacing his ability to lead in such a company of distinguished men. He chose the latter.

It is fair to presume that no other President would have chosen such a Cabinet, and no other President could have managed such a Cabinet so as to get out of it the efficiency that Lincoln did get out of it.

Now comes the play for place and power. Volumes have been written upon Lincoln's mastery over his Cabinet ministers, and I take pleasure in referring to Rothschild on "Lincoln, Master of Men," dealing largely with his Cabinet ministers and generals. Only a brief review of his relations with his Cabinet will be given here.

Seward was the most keenly and conscientiously disappointed candidate at the Chicago Convention. His long experience in public life, twice governor of New York, twice senator, a distinguished leader of his party, gave him the lead in that convention. To his great surprise he was defeated, and at first he and his friends took that defeat very bitterly. Outwardly he seemed magnanimous by taking an active part in the national campaign in behalf of Lincoln and Hamlin, but his inward disappointment and humiliation strikingly appear in his personal letters to his wife. In one of these letters he described himself as "a leader deposed by my own party in the hour of organization for decisive battle."

This was no doubt his conscientious attitude. He honestly believed that not only was he the first and only fit man for that distinguished honor, but that Abraham Lincoln, the nominee, was wholly unfit for that distinguished honor.

Early after the election Lincoln invited him to become his secretary of state in the new administration. Seward took three weeks to answer. He accepted but with such a haughty and lordly air that the President-elect was greatly pained.

Later, on the Saturday before the inauguration, he withdrew that acceptance. Lincoln took time to meet this unexpected withdrawal, and on the following Monday morning addressed a brief note to Seward, in which, among other things, he said:

"It is the subject of the most painful solicitude with me; and I feel constrained to beg that you will countermand the withdrawal. The public interest, I think, demands that you should; and my personal feelings are deeply enlisted in the same direction. Please consider and answer by 9 o'clock A. M. to-morrow."

Seward did enter the Cabinet as secretary of state, but not because he loved Lincoln or had any measure of faith in his ability as the head of the new administration; but as he said in a letter to Mrs. Seward:

"I have advised Mr. L. that I will not decline. It is inevitable. I will try to save freedom and my country."

A few days later he wrote:

"I have assumed a sort of dictatorship for defence; and am laboring night and day, with the cities and States. . . . It seems to me that if I am absent only three days, this administration, the Congress, and the District would fall into consternation and despair. I am the only hopeful, calm, conciliatory person here."

Strange, indeed, that Seward had so misgauged the measure of the new President as to feel warranted in sending him before he had been in office thirty days the following memorandum:

"*Some Thoughts for the President's Consideration, April* 1, 1861

"First. We are at the end of a month's administration, and yet without a policy, either domestic or foreign.

"Second. This, however, is not culpable, and it has even been unavoidable. The presence of the Senate, with the need to meet applications for patronage, have prevented attention to other and more grave matters.

"Third. But further delay to adopt and prosecute our policies for both domestic and foreign affairs would not only bring scandal on the administration, but danger upon the country.

"Fourth. To do this we must dismiss the applicants

for office. But how? I suggest that we make the local appointments forthwith, leaving foreign or general ones for ulterior and occasional action.

"Fifth. The policy at home. I am aware that my views are singular, and perhaps not sufficiently explained. My system is built upon this idea as a ruling one, namely, that we must

"CHANGE THE QUESTION BEFORE THE PUBLIC FROM ONE UPON SLAVERY, OR ABOUT SLAVERY, for a question upon UNION OR DISUNION:

"In other words, from what would be regarded as a party question, to one of patriotism or union.

"The occupation or evacuation of Fort Sumter, although not in fact a slavery or a party question, is so regarded. Witness the temper manifested by the Republicans in the Free States, and even by the Union men in the South.

"I would therefore terminate it as a safe means for changing the issue. I deem it fortunate that the last administration created the necessity.

"For the rest, I would simultaneously defend and re-enforce all the ports in the Gulf, and have the navy recalled from foreign stations to be prepared for a blockade. Put the island of Key West under martial law.

"This will raise distinctly the question of union or disunion. I would maintain every fort and possession in the South.

FOR FOREIGN NATIONS

"I would demand explanations from Spain and France, categorically, at once.

"I would seek explanations from Great Britain and Russia, and send agents into Canada, Mexico, and

Central America to rouse a vigorous continental spirit of independence on this continent against European intervention.

"And, if satisfactory explanations are not received from Spain and France,

"Would convene Congress and declare war against them.

"But whatever policy we adopt, there must be an energetic prosecution of it.

"For this purpose it must be somebody's business to pursue and direct it incessantly.

"Either the President must do it himself, and be all the while active in it, or

"Devolve it on some member of his cabinet. Once adopted, debates on it must end, and all agree and abide.

"It is not in my especial province;

"But I neither seek to evade nor assume responsibility." *

Such a note as this would have cost a Cabinet officer in anybody else's Cabinet than Lincoln's a summary dismissal or at least a deserved rebuke.

No matter what one's prestige, place, or power may be, he is never excused from being a gentleman.

Lincoln even had a right to presume that Secretary Seward, distinguished for his learning, his culture, and social experience, would not so far forget his good manners as to address such a note to a backwoods lawyer from a little town in Illinois.

But nature's gentleman ignored the insults between the lines, no less than in the lines, and sent Seward a lesson in good manners, good policy, and good government that he never forgot.

* Herndon, vol. II, p. 201

Upon the same day the note was received, Lincoln replied as follows:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, April 1, 1861.

"HON. W. H. SEWARD.

"*My dear Sir:* Since parting with you, I have been considering your paper dated this day, and entitled 'Some Thoughts for the President's Consideration.' The first proposition in it is, 'First. We are at the end of a month's administration, and yet without a policy, either domestic or foreign.'

"At the beginning of that month, in the inaugural, I said: 'The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts.' This had your distinct approval at the time; and taken in connection with the order I immediately gave General Scott, directing him to employ every means in his power to strengthen and hold the forts, comprises the exact domestic policy you now urge, with the single exception that it does not propose to abandon Fort Sumter.

"Again, I do not perceive how the re-enforcement of Fort Sumter would be done on a slavery or a party issue, while that of Fort Pickens would be on a more national and patriotic one.

"The news received yesterday in regard to St. Domingo certainly brings a new item within the range of our foreign policy; but up to that time we have been preparing circulars and instructions to ministers and the like, all in perfect harmony, without even a suggestion that we had no foreign policy.

"Upon your closing proposition—that 'whatever policy we adopt, there must be an energetic prosecution of it.

" 'For this purpose it must be somebody's business to pursue and direct it incessantly.

" 'Either the President must do it himself, and be all the while active in it, or

" 'Devolve it on some member of his cabinet. Once adopted, debates on it must end, and all agree and abide'—I remark that if this must be done, I must do it. When a general line of policy is adopted, I apprehend there is no danger of its being changed without good reason, or continuing to be a subject of unnecessary debate; still, upon points arising in its progress I wish, and suppose I am entitled to have, the advice of all the cabinet.

"Your obedient servant,

"A. Lincoln."

For personal forbearance, political magnanimity, and practical poise, this answer of President Lincoln is unexcelled in diplomatic correspondence. It was never revealed to the public until thirty years thereafter, when published by Nicolay and Hay.

No wonder that later this same Secretary Seward, in a letter to his wife, wrote:

"Executive force and vigor are rare qualities. The President is the best of us."

Henceforth the secretary of state revised his estimate of his chief, and learned not only to respect his power but respect his personality.

By the by, the time came when Seward's political prestige was assailed by a committee from the Senate composed of some of its most distinguished members, who called upon President Lincoln demanding the dismissal of Secretary Seward from the Cabinet.

In this company of distinguished senators were Col-

lamore, Sumner, Fessenden, Wade, Trumbull, Grimes, Harris, Howard, and Pomeroy. As they filed into the President's room that night they saw present his entire Cabinet save Secretary Seward, whose dismissal they urged.

The Senate committee made a sharp assault upon the administration and particularly upon Seward's part in it. The position of the Cabinet was best stated by Stanton when he said in reply to the senators:

"This cabinet, gentlemen, is like yonder window. Suppose you allowed it to be understood that passers-by might knock out one pane of glass—just one at a time,—how long do you think any panes would be left in it?"

The Cabinet stood together for Seward. Chase was the one embarrassed man who sat that time as upon a hot griddle, for he had been one of the chief instigators of the anti-Seward movement, and the senators present, as well as President Lincoln, thoroughly knew it.

Chase finally was called upon to state his position with reference to Seward. Upon this question Rothschild in "Master of Men," says:

"Even Chase, brought to bay, was forced into turning, after a fashion, against the men who had come to strengthen his position. He found himself in a predicament. To agree with the Senators in their attacks upon Seward or the administration, though he had made the identical criticisms to them and to others, was, in that presence, obviously out of the question. To take ground effectively against these charges, without stultifying himself, was, under existing conditions, equally impossible. So he joined with his fellow ministers, as best he could, protesting angrily, the while,

against his dilemma, and expressing regret that he had come."

Before the adjournment Lincoln again polled the committee. Of the eight present only four voted against Seward, indicating a decided change in the situation from what the committee had at first exhibited.

Lincoln had saved Seward.

Chase is the one human enigma of the Lincoln Cabinet, a marvellous combination of personal dignity, classical scholarship, legal ability, public experience, conscientious conviction against human slavery. He was the second man Lincoln had determined upon the night of the election for a leading member of his Cabinet. Chase's acceptance of the secretaryship of the treasury was not finally made until after the nomination had been sent to the Senate on the 4th of March, 1861.

Chase, like Seward, could not yet understand why the great National Republican Convention at Chicago should have preferred Lincoln to him. His pride had been piqued by the fact that Seward had been given the preference for secretary of state, and after learning that his name had gone to the Senate for confirmation, called upon President Lincoln to decline the appointment. What happened in that interview with President Lincoln is not reported. Suffice it to say that Lincoln's view prevailed and Chase became a member of the Cabinet.

It must be freely conceded that Chase's management of the nation's finances place him in the class of Hamilton and Gallatin, and nobody appreciated the skill and efficiency of his public service in the great national crisis more than his chief, the President.

But with all nature's lavish gifts, with which this man had been so richly endowed, he was literally obsessed with his own vanity, his own selfishness, and a supreme jealousy of all possible rivals. He was peculiarly susceptible to flattery and loved it in such wholesale quantities as would have been strikingly offensive to almost any other man. He had no confidence in the President's ability and less in the ability of every other member of the Cabinet.

He was a prodigal letter-writer, and in his early service in the government mostly directed his activity against his chief. As a specimen from his erratic pen, I submit the following from the Chase diary:

"Ten days of battle and then such changes—changes in which it is difficult to see the public good. How singularly all our worst defeats have followed administrative er— no, blunders."

To one of his friends he wrote:

"I am not responsible for the management of the war and have no voice in it, except that I am not forbidden to make suggestions and do so now and then when I cannot help it."

He also wrote the President a note something after the manner of Seward's "Thoughts." It was as ungracious as it was unjustifiable.

His penchant for letter-writing found a strange outlet in an active and general correspondence that he had with civil and military leaders throughout the country, who had found themselves, for some reason or other, in disfavor with President Lincoln. He seemed delighted to be encouraging disloyalty and sympathizing with antiadministration men.

His diary furnishes an absolute demonstration of his disloyalty to President Lincoln, personally and

politically. The selfish qualities that dominated his life came out in connection with what became known as the "Pomeroy Circular." His active disloyalty to Abraham Lincoln while in the Cabinet in connection with his war against Seward to force him out of the administration, and his war against Lincoln to beat him for a renomination, so clouds what otherwise might have been a most distinguished career of this able Cabinet officer, that the one incredible thing above all others is that his friends should ever have permitted his diary to be given to the public.

In the beginning of this administration he was probably no more disappointed or distrustful, and conscientiously so, of the capacity of Lincoln for the great trust committed to his hands than Seward; but Seward had been disillusioned. He had early come to understand Lincoln, and to concede him a large measure of the very great ability that he clearly possessed.

Not so with Chase. He was the one disgruntled, dissatisfied, disloyal man toward his chief practically throughout his service in the Cabinet. He had resigned several times, the President refusing to accept his resignation, and Chase did not further press the issue. Finally, in June, 1864, the next day after the famous Cabinet meeting with the United States senators, at the White House, as noted in the discussion of Seward's relations with Lincoln, Chase sent in his resignation. At that time the resignations of both Seward and Chase were in the hands of the President. He refused to accept Seward's and much to Chase's surprise accepted his.

The formal acceptance was by letter to the secretary as follows:

"Your resignation of the office of Secretary of the

Treasury, sent me yesterday, is accepted. Of all I have said in commendation of your ability and fidelity I have nothing to unsay; and yet you and I have reached a point of mutual embarrassment in our official relations, which it seems cannot be overcome or longer sustained, consistently with the public service."

Later on Lincoln, in justification of this acceptance, said to a friend:

"I will tell you how it is with Chase. It is the easiest thing in the world for a man to fall into a bad habit. Chase has fallen into two bad habits. . . . He thinks he has become indispensable to the country; that his intimate friends know it, and he cannot comprehend why the country does not understand it. He also thinks he ought to be President; he has no doubt whatever about that. It is inconceivable to him why people have not found it out; why they don't as one man, rise up and say so. . . . He knows that I could not make it. (The nomination of Field in New York.) He knows that the nomination of Field (as assistant secretary of the treasury) would displease the Unionists of New York, would delight our enemies, and injure our friends. He knows that I could not make it without seriously offending the strongest supporters of the government in New York, and that the nomination would not strengthen him anywhere or with anybody. Yet he resigns because I will not make it. He is either determined to annoy me, or that I shall pat him on the shoulder and coax him to stay. I don't think I ought to do it. I will not do it. I will take him at his word."

Being now out of the Cabinet, he pursued with rare relish his petty criticisms of Lincoln.

In 1864, Chief Justice Taney of Dred Scott notoriety

had died, and a new chief justice had to be selected by President Lincoln to preside over the greatest judicial tribunal of the nation. Who should it be? Naturally a man of large legal ability and experience, whose education and equipment qualified him for that high and honorable place. Likewise, another great qualification must prevail, and that is sympathy with the fundamental constitutional and legislative policies of the administration. Many legislative acts were being challenged upon the basis of unconstitutionality in the federal courts.

Naturally, President Lincoln would cast about him for some great lawyer, some great jurist, who was not inherently hostile to the legislative and administrative policies from the Northern point of view.

Then it was that an unheard-of and almost unbelievable thing happened. This same Salmon P. Chase, who had caused Lincoln much embarrassment while in the Cabinet, had written the bitterest criticism of him, had become a candidate against him to defeat him for renomination, and continued his bitter and unreasonable criticism even after he had retired from the Cabinet, this Chase was nominated by President Lincoln as chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Would you have done it? Could you have done it?

It is only another overwhelming proof that Lincoln, as President, always kept in the foreground one "central idea," and that was the Union, its perpetuity and its welfare, no matter how his personal pride might be hurt or his personal fortunes affected.

As showing his splendid magnanimity along these lines, I want to quote a note quoted by Rothschild in

his "Lincoln, Master of Men." Judge E. Rockwood Hoar and Richard H. Dana called on Lincoln in behalf of Chase's appointment as chief justice. In that interview Lincoln said:

"Mr. Chase is a very able man. He is a very ambitious man and I think on the subject of the presidency a little insane. He has not always behaved very well lately and people say to me—'Now is the time to crush him out.' Well, I am not in favor of crushing anybody out. If there is anything that a man can do and do it well, I say let him do it. Give him a chance."

Edwin M. Stanton—we have all heard of him, and first met him in connection with Lincoln in the "McCormick-Manny" case tried in the Federal Court at Cincinnati in 1855.

We remember Stanton's elbowing Lincoln out of the case and treating him in such form that Lincoln with all his charity characterized it to Herndon as "rude," "purposely ignored," and "roughly handled by that man Stanton."

No doubt Stanton never again expected to hear from that "long-armed creature."

In the meantime Stanton had taken front rank among American lawyers, and had been employed by the government in very important cases. Later he became attorney-general for the spineless administration of James Buchanan, and furnished what little virility that administration possessed in its parting days.

Cameron, Lincoln's first secretary of war, was a bad misfit. His administration was wholly incompetent, if not dishonest. Not that Cameron was dishonest, but many of his subordinates were found to be so, and he was held responsible for it.

Stanton was then living in Washington. He had bitterly criticised Lincoln and his administration. He had written to one of the major-generals of the army:

"No one can imagine the deplorable condition of this city, and the hazard of the government, who did not witness the weakness and panic of the administration, and the painful imbecility of Lincoln."

To ex-President Buchanan he had written:

"A strong feeling of distrust in the candor and sincerity of Lincoln personally and of his cabinet has sprung up. If they had been merely silent and secret, there might have been no ground of complaint. But assurances are said to have been given and declarations made in conflict with the facts now transpiring, in respect to the South, so that no one speaks of Lincoln or any member of his cabinet with respect or regard."

McClellan, in earlier days a stanch friend of Stanton's, says that Stanton often referred to President Lincoln "as a low, cunning clown." According to another, he habitually referred to Lincoln as "the original gorilla," and even said that "Du Chaillu was a fool to wander all the way to Africa in search of what he could so easily have found at Springfield, Illinois."

Stanton was such a hard hitter and hater, that his views concerning Lincoln were no doubt known to the President at the time of Stanton's selection as secretary of war.

Immediately after his choice, Stanton wrote to a friend as follows:

"I hold my present post at the request of a President who knew me personally, but to whom I had not spoken from the 4th of March, 1861, until the day he handed me my commission. [January, 1862.] I knew that everything I cherish and hold dear would be sacri-

ficed by accepting office. But I thought I might help to save the country, and for that I was willing to perish."

Several congressmen once called on Stanton to bring about a certain army appointment. Stanton declined to make it. The committee urged that the President was strongly in favor of it. Stanton replied:

"I do not care what the President wants; the country wants the very best it can get. I am serving the country regardless of individuals."

The congressmen returned to Lincoln and reported their failure. Whereupon Lincoln said:

"Gentlemen, it is my duty to submit. I cannot add to Mr. Stanton's troubles. His position is one of the most difficult in the world. Thousands in the army blame him because they are not promoted, and other thousands out of the army blame him because they are not appointed. The pressure upon him is immeasurable and unending. He is the rock on the beach of our national ocean against which the breakers dash and roar, dash and roar, without ceasing. He fights back the angry waters and prevents them from undermining and overwhelming the land. Gentlemen, I do not see how he survives—why he is not crushed and torn to pieces. Without him I should be destroyed. He performs his task superhumanly. Now do not mind this matter, for Mr. Stanton is right and I cannot wrongly interfere with him."

Numerous instances can be cited in which Stanton had his way, notwithstanding the well-known wishes of the President to the contrary. These were chiefly matters relating to appointments. But on matters of general policy, where the President had reached a fixed conclusion as to any matter, it was the President's will

that finally prevailed. In some cases of appointments, indeed, the President was peremptory, as is shown by the following brief note to Secretary Stanton:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, November 11, 1863.

"DEAR SIR: I personally wish Jacob Freese, of New Jersey, to be appointed colonel for a colored regiment, and this regardless of whether he can tell the exact shade of Julius Cæsar's hair.

"Yours, etc.,

"A. LINCOLN."

Every member of examining boards in civil or military life should read and regard the philosophy of this note. If so, many questions would be omitted from the usual tests. This note is Lincolnian for the essentials of things and the directness with which he points his English.

Rothschild, who has made a painstaking analysis of the relation between Stanton and Lincoln, says:

"The Secretary of War never successfully opposed his will to that of the President in any matter concerning which his chief had reached a definite purpose. Yet Mr. Lincoln made no display of his authority. He even, as we have seen, turned it over at times to Mr. Stanton; or, anxious to avoid a conflict, exercised it with all the delicacy of which he was capable. Few, if any, of the world's great captains could have managed this truculent lieutenant with so little friction. To that end, concession, persuasion, and diplomacy were freely intermingled. When they failed, however, the President asserted his mastery with a vigor before which the Secretary's passion and obstinacy had to give way."

On the general policies of the War Department in the administration, Stanton had Lincoln's confidence, and Lincoln likewise enjoyed the confidence of his great secretary of war. They were one as to their views on McClellan, who was constantly procrastinating and complaining about the insufficiency of his army to meet the enemy. In this respect Stanton once said of him, as recorded by Nicolay and Hay:

"If he had a million men he would swear the enemy had two million, and then he would sit down in the mud and yell for three."

Indeed, though McClellan and Stanton had been close personal and political friends, the President stayed with McClellan even after Stanton was ready to abandon him, and in this respect he had overruled Stanton as to the recall of McClellan.

During one of the many discussions with reference to jealousies between Cabinet officers and generals of the army, Lincoln asserted his authority in the following brief address to his Cabinet:

"I must myself be the judge how long to retain in and when to remove any of you from his position. It would greatly pain me to discover any of you endeavoring to procure another's removal, or in any way to prejudice him before the public. Such endeavor would be a wrong to me, and, much worse, a wrong to the country. My wish is that on this subject no remark be made nor question asked by any of you, here or elsewhere, now or hereafter."

This language needs no comment.

Many delegations called on the President to induce him to dismiss from his Cabinet Secretary Stanton. To one of these friends Lincoln said:

"Go home, my friend, and read attentively the tenth

verse of the thirtieth chapter of Proverbs: 'Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee and thou be found guilty.'"

One of the great historians of that time relates Lincoln's estimate of Stanton to one of these anti-Stanton delegations as follows:

"Mr. Stanton has excellent qualities, and he has his defects. Folks come up here and tell me that there are a great many men in the country who have all Stanton's excellent qualities without his defects. All I have to say is, I haven't met 'em! I don't know 'em! I wish I did!"

After Taney's death a delegation called on the President urging the appointing of Stanton as chief justice. Mr. Lincoln said:

"If you will find me another Secretary of War like him I will gladly appoint him."

Later Stanton sent his resignation to Lincoln, owing to failing health under the great strain of his department. Lincoln, in the presence of the secretary, tore up the resignation, and throwing his arms about Stanton said:

"Stanton, you have been a good friend and a faithful public servant; and it is not for you to say when you will no longer be needed here."

Stanton himself refers to this instance as follows:

"Stanton, you cannot go. Reconstruction is more difficult and dangerous than construction or destruction. You have been our main reliance; you must help us through the final act. The bag is filled. It must be tied, and tied securely. Some knots slip; yours do not. You understand the situation better than anybody else, and it is my wish and the country's that you remain."

Stanton bowed to the will that was stronger than his own, and continued his duties.

During the campaign for re-election there was no influence in the Cabinet so strongly and successfully exerted in the President's favor as that by Edwin M. Stanton, and during Lincoln's latter days the relations between them were as cordial and confidential as that between Lincoln and any other member of his Cabinet, and as the President passed away by the bullet of Booth, the great Stanton, with tears trickling down his cheeks, pathetically observed:

"Now he belongs to the ages."

There is no higher test of leadership than ability to lead in adversity and defeat.

When we think of all the troubles, defeats, and disasters that befell Abraham Lincoln and his administration during his first three years in office, we wonder why he was not driven to desperation. We wonder what great faith and power could have sustained him in his loyalty to liberty and his dedication to democracy. None but his divine dedication.

With Greeley's cry "On to Richmond" before we were ready, which was demonstrated at Bull Run; with Fremont's precipitous emancipation policy in Missouri, which had to be reversed; with McClellan's procrastination and petty complaints of executive interference; with the Trent affair, in which Captain Wilkes was made a hero and the national demand, for the time, was to uphold his action, all of which had to be reversed by the President and Secretary Seward; with Cameron's gross mismanagement in the Department of War; with the death of his son Willie; with the failure of his policy of emancipation with compensation; with the defeats at Fredericksburg and

Chancellorsville, and the failure of McClellan to follow up his victory at Antietam and that of Meade to follow up his victory at Gettysburg; with stocks falling, and troops reduced and five big Northern States repudiating the administration in their elections, we wonder how the President ever survived so many failures, so many defeats, so many embarrassments. Through it all, not only the opposition press, but many of his own party, charged the responsibility for the whole series of political troubles and military disasters to the President of the United States.

His preservation through it all seems well-nigh providential. Yet all this while he was searching intently for a general, and finally found him in the silent man, U. S. Grant. Thenceforth victory became as frequent as defeat had been frequent.

Lincoln was always laboring to right the wrongs to others, but he never lowered himself to the point of attempting to right any wrong to himself. For his own justification he depended upon the logic of time and events.

Public leadership, to be successful, must proceed from an intelligent dedication to a great cause. A complete and correct view of that cause is impossible if it shall be clouded by envyings, jealousies, personal likes and dislikes.

The question, after all, is, What instruments and individuals will best promote the cause? That was always the crucial question with Abraham Lincoln.

Emerson has aptly expressed this trait of Lincoln as follows:

"His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory of a wrong."

CHAPTER XXII

LINCOLN ON PEACE

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was a man of peace—the peace of justice, the peace of honor, the peace of the Union. He not only believed in it, he would fight for it, he would die for it.

From the day of his nomination for the presidency, May 18, 1860, until the day of his inauguration, March 4, 1861, he made no public statement of his policies, either before the election or afterward. There were not even any front-porch speeches or public letters or interviews. This has been referred to in another chapter.

The nearest approach to any utterance upon the menacing situation then presented was at Philadelphia, at Independence Hall, on February 22, 1861, when he said:

"It was not there mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weight would be lifted from the shoulders of all men and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this

country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it. Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course; and I may say in advance that there will be no bloodshed unless it be forced upon the Government. The Government will not use force, unless force is used against it."

Touching this matter of war, Lincoln said near the close of his first inaugural:

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict, without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the Government while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend' it."

The President and his Cabinet had been divided upon provisions and reinforcements for Fort Sumter. Lincoln was for the policy, Seward and Cameron against it, but finally the relief commission sailed out of New York, April 9. The opening gun against Fort Sumter was fired at 4.30 A. M., April 12. Civil War had begun.

On April 15 he issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 militia "to favor, facilitate and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity and the existence of our national union and the perpetuity of popular government and to redress wrongs already long enough endured."

The firing on Fort Sumter unified the South, but in an even greater degree it unified the North for the defense of the Union.

In 1863 at Gettysburg Lincoln avowed his purpose to prosecute the war to a successful issue in the use of these words:

"It is for us who live rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here solemnly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this Nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

The year following, 1864, he avows the same plain and persistent purpose.

A great fair was being held at Philadelphia, June 16, 1864, for the benefit of the United States Sanitary Commission, one of the great charities of that day that was doing much to relieve the horrors and sufferings of war. At this fair President Lincoln was an honored guest and made a brief address, in which, among other things, he said:

"They [these charities] . . . give proof that the national resources are not at all exhausted, and that the national spirit of patriotism is even firmer and stronger than at the commencement of the war.

"It is a pertinent question often asked in the mind privately, and from one to the other, when is the war to end? Surely I feel as deep an interest in this question as any other question; but I do not wish to name a day, a month, or year, when it is to end. I do not wish to run any risk of seeing the time come without our being ready for the end, for fear of disappointment

because the time had come and not the end. *We accepted this war for an object, a worthy object, and the war will end when that object is attained. Under God, I hope it will never end until that time.* Speaking of the present campaign, General Grant is reported to have said 'I am going through on this line if it takes all summer.' This war has taken three years; it was begun or accepted upon the line of restoring the national authority over the whole national domain, and for the American people, as far as my knowledge enables me to speak, I say we are going through on this line if it takes three years more."

At the Democratic National Convention in 1864 a direct and distinct demand was made for a cessation of hostilities. Vallandigham was one of the leading spirits of the convention and made the platform. Upon the peace platform stood a war candidate, General George B. McClellan. McClellan himself repudiated the platform for peace, and what was left of it was soon shot to death by General Grant, General Sherman, and Admiral Farragut.

Lincoln's re-election had been in grave doubt during the summer of 1864. He himself at one time fully expected defeat. In which event what would be, and should be, the leading question in his mind? He wrote it down on a slip of paper, had his Cabinet members put their names upon the back without noting its contents, and folding it up, laid it away. That paper read:

"Executive Mansion
"Washington, August 23, 1864.

"This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to so cooperate with the President-elect *as to save the Union*

between the election and the inauguration; as he will have secured his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterward.

"A. LINCOLN."

The November election brought much encouragement to Lincoln and the administration, and in his message to Congress in December, 1864, among other things, he said:

"On careful consideration of all the evidence accessible, it seems to me that no attempt at negotiation with the insurgent leader could result in any good. He would accept nothing short of severance of the Union —precisely what we will not and cannot give. His declarations to this effect are explicit and oft repeated. He does not attempt to deceive us. He affords us no excuse to deceive ourselves. He cannot voluntarily re-accept the Union; we cannot voluntarily yield it. Between him and us the issue is distinct, simple, and inflexible."

It may not be amiss here as showing the unselfish patriotism of Abraham Lincoln infinitely above any personal or political consideration for himself, that during the summer of 1864, when the army was in need of more troops, he issued another draft that aroused much adverse public sentiment, because Grant and Sherman and the other generals needed them, though his political friends all advised him against it as a bad piece of politics and one that would imperil his election. Nevertheless, he said:

"We must lose nothing even if I am defeated. I am quite willing the people should understand the issue. My re-election will mean that the rebellion is to be crushed by force of arms."

And on July 18 he called for 500,000 volunteers for

one, two, and three years. There is real courage and real heroism for us.

Read again that part of his second inaugural that applies to this same situation, with a purpose as firm and as fearless as the everlasting rock:

"Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may soon pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid with another drawn with the sword; as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, . . . to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

I fear some of us remember too much the words, "With malice toward none, with charity for all," and forget Lincoln's reference to "firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, . . . to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Lincoln was persistently plagued during his administration by the pestiferous and perverse peace man, who was conspicuous, not only among his political opponents, but even among his professed friends. It would be impossible, as well as inadvisable, in a work of this scope to consider all of these negotiations. It will be sufficient to note generally that Lincoln had

no faith in any of them after the bombardment of Fort Sumter.

One of the most vociferous and troublesome of the peace agitators was one Vallandigham, a brilliant, capable, and perhaps well-meaning man, but intensely partisan. In 1863 he gave Lincoln and the Union cause serious trouble and embarrassment by his public addresses to the effect that the war was "a wicked, cruel and unnecessary war"; "a war not being waged for the preservation of the Union"; "a war for the purpose of crushing out liberty and erecting a despotism."

He further said "that if the administration had so wished the war could have been honorably terminated months ago"; that "peace might have been honorably obtained by listening to the proposed intermediation of France," etc.

He was arrested by General Burnside, tried, and found guilty, sentenced to "close confinement in some fortress of the United States." Finally he was sent to the Confederate lines and from there went to Canada. Later he ran for governor of Ohio on the Democratic ticket, and was overwhelmingly beaten by General Brough by some ninety thousand.

Numerous protests were sent to President Lincoln against the treatment accorded Vallandigham, especially by "New York Democrats" and "Ohio Democrats." Lincoln answered these protests, and in one of his replies said:

" . . . he who dissuades one man from volunteering, or induces one soldier to desert, weakens the Union cause as much as he who kills a Union soldier in battle. Yet this dissuasion or inducement may be so conducted as to be no defined crime of which any civil court would take cognizance."

Among Lincoln's friends there are two instances, however, that are worthy of special mention. Of this peace class there is no better example than that of Horace Greeley. Greeley was as brilliant and well meaning as he was erratic and unpractical. He it was who at the beginning of the war was in favor of "letting the erring sisters go in peace."

In July, 1864, Greeley received a letter advising that there were in Canada two ambassadors of the rebel government with full power to negotiate peace. Greeley enclosed this letter to Lincoln, commenting that he thought the matter deserved attention.

He also wrote Lincoln in that connection, saying:

"I venture to remind you that our bleeding, bankrupt, almost dying country, longs for peace—shudders at the prospect of fresh conscriptions, of further wholesale devastations, and of new rivers of human blood; and a wide-spread conviction that the government and its supporters are not anxious for peace, and do not improve proffered opportunities to achieve it, is doing great harm now, and is morally certain, unless removed, to do far greater in the approaching elections."

To that letter the President replied as follows:

"If you can find any person, anywhere, professing to have any proposition of Jefferson Davis, in writing, embracing the restoration of the Union and abandonment of slavery, whatever else it embraces, say to him that he may come to me with you."

Greeley replied to the President, stating in substance that he had information upon which he could rely that two persons had been duly commissioned and empowered to negotiate for peace and were at that time not far from Niagara Falls. Their names were Clement

C. Clay, of Alabama, and Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi.

Lincoln later wrote Mr. Greeley:

"I am disappointed that you have not already reached here with those commissioners. If they would consent to come on being shown my letter to you of the ninth inst., show that and this to them; and, if they will consent to come on the terms stated in the former, bring them. I not only intend a sincere effort for peace, but I intend that you shall be a personal witness that it is made."

Lincoln had no confidence in the commissioners, or their authority, but he resolved to throw the responsibility for it upon Greeley by appointing him as a commissioner to interview and negotiate with the commissioners from the South.

Lincoln sent Major Hay to Niagara with the following letter:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
"WASHINGTON, July 18, 1864.

"*To Whom It May Concern:*

"Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive government of the United States, and will be met on liberal terms on substantial and collateral points; and the bearer or bearers thereof shall have safe-conduct both ways.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

To a friend afterward Lincoln said his appointment of Greeley arose out of the fact that he had no con-

fidence whatsoever either in the authority of the Southern commissioners or in their disposition for peace, and he proposed to appoint Greeley and let him "crack that nut."

Later on Francis P. Blair, Jr., was infected with the same peace germ and sought to enlist Lincoln to another conference with three commissioners from the South—Alexander H. Stephens, R. M. T. Hunter, and John A. Campbell—all members of the Confederate Government. The result of Blair's mediation was that Secretary Seward received from Lincoln authority to meet said commissioners from the Confederate Government, with these specific instructions submitted by President Lincoln:

"1. The restoration of the national authority throughout all the States.

"2. No receding by the executive of the United States on the slavery question from the position assumed thereon in the late annual message to Congress, and in preceding documents.

"3. No cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war and the disbanding of all forces hostile to the government."

Generous as Lincoln could be and generous as he generally was to a foe, he realized that the issue here was inflexible and was not a subject for negotiation between the North and South, except upon the basis that he above outlined. Some things cannot be compromised.

During the latter months of Lincoln's life he had given much attention to the subject of reconstruction in the South. He anticipated the victories of Grant and Sherman that must soon end the war. He foresaw some of the divisions among the Northern states-

men as to the policies that would be advocated for reconstruction. One of the great questions footballed through Congress was this, Are the States that are members of the Confederate Government in the Union or out of the Union?

Lincoln handled this question in his own inimitable way in the following pointed and pertinent language:

"We all agree, that the seceded States, so called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union, and that the sole object of the government, civil and military, in regard to those States is to again get them into the proper practical relation. I believe that it is not only possible, but in fact easier, to do this without deciding or even considering whether these States have ever been out of the Union, than with it. Finding themselves safely at home, it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these States and the Union, and each forever after innocently indulge his own opinion whether in doing the acts he brought the States from without into the Union, or only gave them proper assistance, they never having been out of it."

Lincoln as a lawyer and logician never had any patience with distinguishing between tweedledee and tweedledum. He always cut the "Gordian knot" of technicality and got into the heart and substance of things. He did that as a lawyer, he did it more as a statesman.

At the bottom of the reconstruction policy was the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, that was to forever rivet the rights of freemen to the late slave. It was to put the military emancipation proclamation

into our civil constitution. But Booth's bullet did its deadly work on April 14, 1865.

The soul of the broad-gauged, far-sighted, generous, merciful Lincoln took its flight to another country, and at the very hour the South, no less than the North, needed him most.

The patient, considerate, and troubled administration of Abraham Lincoln, free from all hate, malice, or revenge, was over. Radicalism and rancor were now to design and direct the nation's policies of reconstructing the South. What an awful story of trouble and terror, crime and crimination followed in the wake of Andrew Johnson, his successor!

Surely it could never have occurred with Lincoln's wise and humane personality in command at Washington. He indicated enough of his plans for the South before his martyrdom to assure us of the most benevolent, generous, and considerate policies for the restoration and reconstruction of the South. The reign of terror, the carpetbag government, the Kuklux Klan and all were the natural and almost necessary result of Lincoln's assassination.

CHAPTER XXIII

LINCOLN THE MOST UNSELFISH MAN

TIME would fail me to detail the many instances recorded in the various biographies of Lincoln exhibiting almost divine unselfishness; from his kindness to the returning soldier in Kentucky, to his companions and neighbors at Gentryville in Indiana, toward the "plain folk" of New Salem, Illinois, his professional conduct at Springfield and his official life at Washington. But some of these incidents are so strikingly significant, so exceptional and surprising that they should be given more than mere mention in surveying the unselfish character and service of his magnanimous life.

Few great historical characters who were possessed of the ambition of Abraham Lincoln were so utterly free from envy and jealousy of their fellows. Though the leader of the Whig party in Illinois as early as 1840, when he was its unanimous candidate for speaker in the general assembly, his defeat for nomination for Congress in 1842 by John J. Hardin did not sour him.

He came back manfully in 1844, when he was again defeated by Edward M. Baker. He loyally and enthusiastically supported Baker and stumped the district for him.

In 1846 he was again a candidate and was this time nominated. During his term in Congress he received a letter from his old-time partner, Herndon, complaining that the young men of Illinois were being rudely and inconsiderately pushed aside by the older men, whom

Herndon characterized as "the old fossils in the party who were constantly holding the young man back." Mr. Lincoln administered a very gentle and gracious rebuke in the following letter; under date of July 10, 1848, he wrote:

"Dear William:

"Your letter covering the newspaper slips was received last night. The subject of that letter is exceedingly painful to me, and I cannot but think there is some mistake in your impression of the motives of the old men. I suppose I am now one of the old men; and I declare on my veracity, which I think is good with you, that nothing could afford me more satisfaction than to learn that you and others of my young friends at home were doing battle in the contest and endearing themselves to the people and taking a stand far above any I have ever been able to reach in their admiration. I cannot conceive that other men feel differently. Of course I cannot demonstrate what I say; but I was young once, and I am sure I was never ungenerously thrust back. I hardly know what to say. The way for a young man to rise is to improve himself every way he can, never suspecting that anybody wishes to hinder him. Allow me to assure you that suspicion and jealousy never did help any man in any situation." . . . .

The petty disappointments and personal insults that come and go in one's personal and public life were either ignored or forgotten by him. He always kept his eye on the "central idea" rather than some personal grievance or insult.

Lincoln was not only not selfish, he was constitu-

tionally unselfish in the superlative degree. Nowhere was this better demonstrated than in connection with his Cabinet. Not a man in it was chosen because of his personal loyalty and ability to advance the political fortunes of Abraham Lincoln. Upon the contrary, the primary and paramount idea throughout his choice of Cabinet members was the crystallization of public sentiment for the Union.

This "frontier lawyer" of Duff Armstrong and the Widow Wright, of the Illinois prairies, as he was known in the East, had now become chief counsel for the American people in the great governmental court at Washington, and in this case no Stanton would elbow him out of the great cause to which he had dedicated his life.

He not only continued as counsel, but as chief counsel, and his Cabinet ministers with one glaring and unpardonable exception, recognized who the chief counsel was.

All this came about, not by any selfish assertion of power, not by any personal vanity, but by reason of superiority of sense, his judgment, his foresight, his fairness and firmness, his loyalty to liberty and his devotion to democracy.

We see him again patiently reading Seward's note, "Some Thoughts for the Consideration of the President," with all its haughtiness, its ungracious insults, and we see again the President's fair, firm, and conclusive answer.

No one will ever know how much his personal pride, during the first year or two of Seward's service, was hurt and cut to the quick. But he ignored it all, and later these two were the most faithful friends in one common cause, Union and Liberty.

No one can ever know the continuous, intolerable, petty, and paltry faultfinding of Chase, his treasonable undermining of the President's political loyalty and fortunes, and his continual quarrelling with other members of the Cabinet, and how long thereafter the President kept him, feeling that while he was disloyal to A. Lincoln, he was rendering efficient service to Uncle Sam. Then finally, when it was discovered that he was tunnelling under Seward through the United States Senate, and also under Lincoln and his policies, it was inevitable that the President should accept Chase's third resignation. Chase had literally forced himself out of the Cabinet.

And then again upon Taney's death, when a new chief justice had to be chosen, how easy it would have been for Mr. Lincoln to have appointed some one experienced and qualified for that honorable place in our national jurisprudence, with no thought at all of Chase, and when some of his friends ventured to urge his name, which in view of the relations between the secretary of the treasury and the President, would seem the sheerest effrontery, how easy it was for Lincoln to say: "Now is my chance to humiliate him, to get even with him."

Lincoln's appointment of Chase under the circumstances of their past relationship, and Chase's treatment of him, as shown by the latter's own diary, as well as the many disclosures of the biographies of both of them, demonstrate a magnanimity upon the part of Abraham Lincoln so rare and so rich in human kindness that it almost stamps him as divine. Could you have done it? Would you have done it? Would any other President have done it that you ever knew of?

And then to Stanton's conduct, with all its dis-

courtesies, its insults in the Federal Court at Cincinnati, in 1855, as noted in previous chapters. To have overlooked this "professional outrage," this "personal insult," to have laid aside his bitterest criticisms, given wide publicity in Washington and the country, in which he characterized Lincoln's administration as "political imbecility," to have taken this man Stanton into his official family in charge of the great office of secretary of war, is surely too much to expect of human flesh. And yet Lincoln did it. Could you have done it? Would you have done it? Has any other President ever done it?

A reasonable amount of criticism is a good thing for a public officer. It keeps reminding him of the fact that after all he is only a public servant, a public agent, a public representative. He admits it the day before election. He too often forgets it the day after. Such criticism, as a rule, only makes big men bigger and little men littler, both eminently desirable results in the evolution of government.

"With malice toward none and charity for all"—this literally personified Abraham Lincoln throughout his life, and this spirit of the man from Illinois still reminds us that his "soul goes marching on," and that it is receiving a new life and a new loyalty in his own fair country—Our America.

CHAPTER XXIV

LINCOLN'S MISCELLANEOUS VIEWS

RELIGION

From an interview between Mr. Newton Bateman, superintendent of public instruction of Illinois, and Lincoln, in 1860, touching a poll-book of Springfield, particularly relating to the ministers of that city.

"HERE are twenty-three ministers of different denominations, and all of them are against me but three; and here are a great many prominent members of the churches, a very large majority of whom are against me. Mr. Bateman, I am not a Christian—God knows I would be one—but I have carefully read the Bible, and I do not so understand this book"; (and he drew from his bosom a pocket New Testament). "These men well know," he continued, "that I am for freedom in the territories, freedom everywhere as far as the Constitution and laws will permit, and that my opponents are for slavery. They know this, and yet, with this book in their hands, in the light of which human bondage cannot live a moment, they are going to vote against me. I do not understand it at all."

Here Mr. Lincoln paused—paused for long minutes, his features surcharged with emotion. Then he rose and walked up and down the room in the effort to retain or regain his self-possession. Stopping at last, he said, with a trembling voice and his cheeks wet with tears:

"I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If He has a place and work for me

—and I think He has—I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I am right because I know that liberty is right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God. I have told them that a house divided against itself cannot stand, and Christ and reason say the same; and they will find it so. Douglas don't care whether slavery is voted up or voted down, but God cares, and humanity cares, and I care; and with God's help I shall not fail. I may not see the end; but it will come, and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find that they have not read their Bibles aright."

Much of this was uttered as if he were speaking to himself, and with a sad and earnest solemnity of manner impossible to be described. After a pause, he resumed: "Doesn't it appear strange that men can ignore the moral aspects of this contest? A revelation could not make it plainer to me that slavery or the government must be destroyed. The future would be something awful, as I look at it, but for this rock on which I stand" (alluding to the Testament which he still held in his hand), "especially with the knowledge of how these ministers are going to vote. It seems as if God had borne with this thing (slavery) until the very teachers of religion have come to defend it from the Bible, and to claim for it a divine character and sanction; and now the cup of iniquity is full, and the vials of wrath will be poured out."

PERSUADING MEN

From a temperance speech delivered before the Springfield Washingtonian Temperance Society, February 22, 1842.

"When the conduct of men is designed to be influenced, persuasion, kind, unassuming persuasion,

should ever be adopted. It is an old and true maxim 'that a drop of honey catches more flies than a gallon of gall.' So with men. If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend. Therein is a drop of honey that catches his heart, which, say what he will, is the great highroad to his reason, and which, when once gained, you will find but little trouble in convincing his judgment of the justice of your cause, if indeed that cause really be a just one. On the contrary, assume to dictate to his judgment, or to command his action, or to mark him as one to be shunned and despised, and he will retreat within himself, close all the avenues to his head and his heart; and though your cause be naked truth itself, transformed to the heaviest lance, harder than steel, and sharper than steel can be made, and though you throw it with more than herculean force and precision, you shall be no more able to pierce him than to penetrate the hard shell of a tortoise with a rye straw. Such is man, and so must he be understood by those who would lead him, even to his own best interests.

. . . . . .

"Few can be induced to labor exclusively for posterity; and none will do it enthusiastically. Posterity has done nothing for us; and theorize on it as we may, practically we shall do very little for it, unless we are made to think we are at the same time doing something for ourselves."

TEMPERANCE

From the same temperance address.

"Turn now to the temperance revolution. In it we shall find a stronger bondage broken, a viler slavery manumitted, a greater tyrant deposed; in it, more

of want supplied, more disease healed, more sorrow assuaged. By it no orphans starving, no widows weeping. By it, none wounded in feeling, none injured in interest; even the dram-maker and dram-seller will have glided into other occupations so gradually as never to have felt the change, and will stand ready to join all others in the universal song of gladness. And what a noble ally this to the cause of political freedom, with such an aid its march cannot fail to be on and on, till every son of earth shall drink in rich fruition the sorrow-quenching draughts of perfect liberty. Happy day when—all appetites controlled, all poisons subdued, all matter subjected—mind, all conquering mind, shall live and move, the monarch of the world. Glorious consummation! Hail, fall of fury! Reign of reason, all hail!

"And when the victory shall be complete,—when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on the earth,—how proud the title of that land which may truly claim to be the birthplace and the cradle of both those revolutions that shall have ended in that victory. How nobly distinguished that people who shall have planted and nurtured to maturity both the political and moral freedom of their species."

LABOR

From the President's Message of December 3, 1861.

"It is not needed nor fitting here that a general argument should be made in favor of popular institutions; but there is one point, with its connections, not so hackneyed as most others, to which I ask a brief attention. It is the effort to place capital on an equal footing with, if not above, labor, in the structure of government. It is assumed that labor is avail-

able only in connection with capital; that nobody labors unless somebody else, owning capital, somehow by the use of it induces him to labor. This assumed, it is next considered whether it is best that capital shall hire laborers, and thus induce them to work by their own consent, or buy them, and drive them to it without their consent. Having proceeded thus far, it is naturally concluded that all laborers are either hired laborers or what we call slaves. And, further, it is assumed that whoever is once a hired laborer is fixed in that condition for life.

"Now, there is no such relation between capital and labor as assumed, nor is there any such thing as a free man being fixed for life in the condition of a hired laborer. Both these assumptions are false, and all inferences from them are groundless.

"Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights, which are as worthy of protection as any other rights. Nor is it denied that there is, and probably always will be, a relation between labor and capital producing mutual benefits. The error is in assuming that the whole of labor of the community exists within that relation. A few men own capital, and that few avoid labor themselves, and with their capital hire or buy another few to labor for them. A large majority belong to neither class—neither work for others nor have others working for them. In most of the Southern States a majority of the whole people, of all colors are neither slaves nor masters; while in the Northern a large majority are neither hirers nor hired. Men with their families—wives, sons, and daughters—work for themselves, on

their farms, in their houses, and in their shops taking the whole product to themselves, and asking no favors of capital on the one hand, nor of hired laborers or slaves on the other. It is not forgotten that a considerable number of persons mingle their own labor with capital—that is, they labor with their own hands and also buy or hire others to labor for them; but this is only a mixed and not a distinct class. No principle stated is disturbed by the existence of this mixed class.

"Again, as has already been said, there is not, of necessity, any such thing as the free hired laborer being fixed to that condition for life. Many independent men everywhere in these States, a few years back in their lives, were hired laborers. The prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself, then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This is the just and generous and prosperous system which opens the way to all—gives hope to all, and consequent energy and progress and improvement of condition to all. No men living are more worthy to be trusted than those who toil up from poverty—none less inclined to take or touch aught which they have not honestly earned. Let them beware of surrendering a political power which they already possess, and which, if surrendered, will surely be used to close the door of advancement against such as they, and to fix new disabilities and burdens upon them, till all of liberty shall be lost."

From the President's Message to Congress, July 4, 1861.

"This is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union it is a struggle for maintaining in the

world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all; to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life. Yielding to partial and temporary departures, from necessity, this is the leading object of the government for whose existence we contend.

"I am most happy to believe that the plain people understand and appreciate this. It is worthy of note that while in this, the government's hour of trial, large numbers of those in the army and navy who have been favored with the officers have resigned and proved false to the hand which had pampered them, not one common soldier or common sailor is known to have deserted his flag."

AGRICULTURE

From an address before an agricultural society, September 30, 1859.

"I know nothing so pleasant to the mind as the discovery of anything that is at once new and valuable—nothing that so lightens and sweetens toil as the hopeful pursuit of such discovery. And how vast and how varied a field is agriculture for such discovery! The mind already trained to thought in the country school, or higher school, cannot fail to find there an exhaustless source of enjoyment. Every blade of grass is a study; and to produce two where there was but one is both a profit and a pleasure. And not grass alone, but soils, seeds, and seasons—hedges, ditches, and fences—draining, droughts, and irrigation—plowing, hoeing, and harrowing—reaping, mowing, and threshing—saving crops, pests of crops, diseases of crops, and

what will prevent or cure them—implements, utensils, and machines, their relative merits, and how to improve them—hogs, horses, and cattle—sheep, goats, and poultry—trees, shrubs, fruits, plants and flowers—the thousand things of which these are specimens—each a world of study within itself.

"In all this, book-learning is available. A capacity and taste for reading gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others. It is the key, or one of the keys, to the already solved problems. And not only so: it gives a relish and facility for successfully pursuing the unsolved ones. The rudiments of science are available, highly available. Some knowledge of botany assists in dealing with the vegetable world—with all growing crops. Chemistry assists in the analysis of soils, selection and application of manures, and in numerous other ways. The mechanical branches of natural philosophy are ready help in almost everything, but especially in reference to implements and machinery.

"The thought recurs that education—cultivated thought—can best be combined with agricultural labor, or any labor, on the principle of thorough work; that careless, half performed, slovenly work makes no place for such combination; and thorough work, again renders sufficient the smallest quantity of ground to each man; and this, again, conforms to what must occur in a world less inclined to wars and more devoted to the arts of peace than heretofore. Population must increase rapidly, more rapidly than in former times, and ere long the most valuable of all arts will be the art of deriving a comfortable subsistence from the smallest area of soil. No community whose every member possesses this art, can ever be the victim of op-

pression in any of its forms. Such community will be alike independent of crowned kings, money kings, and land kings.

. . . . . .

"The ambition for broad acres leads to poor farming, even with men of energy. I scarcely ever knew a mammoth farm to sustain itself, much less to return a profit upon the outlay. I have more than once known a man to spend a respectable fortune upon one, fail, and leave it, and then some man of modest aim get a small fraction of the ground, and make a good living upon it. Mammoth farms are like tools or weapons which are too heavy to be handled; ere long they are thrown aside at a great loss."

RECONSTRUCTION

From the last public address, April 11, 1865.

"We meet this evening not in sorrow, but in gladness of heart. The evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond, and the surrender of the principal insurgent army, give hope of a righteous and speedy peace, whose joyous expression cannot be restrained. In the midst of this, however, He from whom all blessings flow must not be forgotten. A call for a national thanksgiving is being prepared, and will be duly promulgated. Nor must those whose harder part give us the cause of rejoicing be overlooked. Their honors must not be parceled out with others. I myself was near the front, and had the high pleasure of transmitting much of the good news to you; but no part of the honor for plan or execution is mine. To General Grant, his skilful officers and brave men, all be-

longs. The gallant navy stood ready, but was not in reach to take active part.

. . . . . .

"The new constitution of Louisiana, declaring emancipation for the whole State, practically applies the proclamation to the part previously excepted. It does not adopt apprenticeship for freed people, and it is silent, as it could not well be otherwise, about the admission of members to Congress. So that, as it applies to Louisiana, every member of the Cabinet fully approved the plan. The message went to Congress, and I received many commendations of the plan, written and verbal, and not a single objection to it from any professed emancipationist came to my knowledge until after the news reached Washington that the people of Louisiana had begun to move in accordance with it. From about July, 1862, I had corresponded with different persons supposed to be interested (in) seeking a reconstruction of a State government for Louisiana. When the message of 1863, with the plan before mentioned, reached New Orleans, General Banks wrote me that he was confident that the people, with his military co-operation, would reconstruct substantially on that plan. I wrote to him and some of them to try it. They tried it, and the result is known. Such has been my only agency in getting up the Louisiana government.

"As to sustaining it, my promise is out, as before stated. But as bad promises are better broken than kept, I shall treat this as a bad promise, and break it whenever I shall be convinced that keeping it is adverse to the public interest; but I have not yet been so convinced. I have been shown a letter on this subject, supposed to be an able one, in which the

writer expresses regret that my mind has not seemed to be definitely fixed on the question whether the seceded States, so-called, are in the Union or out of it. It would perhaps add astonishment to his regret were he to learn that since I have found professed Union men endeavoring to make that question, I have purposely forborne any public expression upon it. As appears to me, that question has not been, nor yet is, a practically material one, and that any discussion of it, while it thus remains practically immaterial, could have no effect other than the mischievous one of dividing our friends. As yet, whatever it may hereafter become, that question is bad as the basis of a controversy, and good for nothing at all—a merely pernicious abstraction.

"We all agree that the seceded States, so-called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union, and that the sole object of the government, civil and military, in regard to those States, is to again get them into that proper practical relation. I believe that it is not only possible, but in fact easier, to do this without deciding or even considering whether these States have ever been out of the Union, than with it. Finding themselves safely at home, it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these States and the Union, and each forever after innocently indulge his own opinion whether in doing the acts he brought the States from without into the Union, or only gave them proper assistance, they never having been out of it. The amount of constituency, so to speak, on which the new Louisiana government rests, would be more satisfactory to all if it contained 50,000 or

30,000, or even 20,000 instead of only about 12,000, as it does. It is also unsatisfactory to some that the elective franchise is not given to the colored man. I would myself prefer that it were now conferred on the very intelligent, and on those who serve our cause as soldiers.

"Still, the question is not whether the Louisiana government, as it stands, is quite all that is desirable. The question is, will it be wiser to take it as it is and help to improve it, or to reject and disperse it? Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new State government? Some twelve thousand voters in the heretofore slave State of Louisiana have sworn allegiance to the Union, assumed to be the rightful political power of the State, held elections, organized a State government, adopted a free-State constitution, giving the benefit of public schools equally to black and white, and empowering the legislature to confer the elective franchise upon the colored man. Their legislature has already voted to ratify the constitutional amendment recently passed by Congress, abolishing slavery throughout the nation. These 12,000 persons are thus fully committed to the Union and to perpetual freedom in the State—committed to the very things, and nearly all the things, the nation wants—and they ask the nation's recognition and its assistance to make good their committal.

"Now, if we reject and spurn them, we do our utmost to disorganize and disperse them. We, in effect, say to the white man: You are worthless or worse; we will neither help you, nor be helped by you. To the blacks we say: This cup of liberty which these, your old masters, hold to your lips we will dash from

you and leave you to the chances of gathering the spilled and scattered contents in some vague and undefined when, where, and how. If this course, discouraging and paralyzing both white and black, has any tendency to bring Louisiana into proper practical relations with the Union, I have so far been unable to perceive it. If, on the contrary, we recognize and sustain the new government of Louisiana, the converse of all this is made true. We encourage the hearts and nerve the arms of the 12,000 to adhere to their work, and argue for it, and proselyte for it, and fight for it, and feed it, and grow it, and ripen it to a complete success. The colored man, too, in seeing all united for him, is inspired with vigilance, and energy, and daring, to the same end. Grant that he desires the elective franchise, will he not attain it sooner by saving the already advanced steps toward it than by running backward over them? Concede that the new government of Louisiana is only what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it.

"Again, if we reject Louisiana we also reject one vote in favor of the proposed amendment to the national Constitution. To meet this proposition it has been argued that no more than three-fourths of those States which have not attempted secession are necessary to validly ratify the amendment. I do not commit myself against this further than to say that such a ratification would be questionable, and sure to be persistently questioned, while a ratification by three-fourths of all the States would be unquestioned and unquestionable. I repeat the question: Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new

State government? What has been said of Louisiana will apply generally to other States. And yet so great peculiarities pertain to each State, and such important and sudden changes occur in the same State, and withal so new and unprecedented is the whole case that no exclusive and inflexible plan can safely be prescribed as to details and collaterals. Such exclusive and inflexible plan would surely become a new entanglement. Important principles may and must be inflexible. In the present situation, as the phrase goes, it may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper."